

FRONT: GAY MARRIAGE • 6 / MUSIC: LUTHER WRIGHT • 31 / ARTS: THE FIREBIRD • 40

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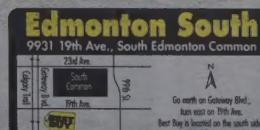
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CONTENTS

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ON THE COVER

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FRONT

- 4 Your Vue
- 6 Gay marriage
- 7 Vue News
- 7 VuePoint
- 8 Tom the Dancing Bug
- 8 Haiku Horoscope
- 9 Coke/Pepsi backlash in India
- 10 Media Jungle
- 11 Infinite Lives
- 13 Cosmopolis
- 13 Three Dollar Bill
- 14 Case modding

DISH

- 16 Dish Weekly
- 19 Globe Tar Bar and Grill

MUSIC

- 20 This Week
- 21 No Use for a Name
- 22 Music Notes
- 24 Music Weekly
- 26 Madviolet
- 27 Street Vision
- 28 Root Down
- 29 BPM
- 30 Classical Notes
- 31 Luther Wright and the Wrongs
- 32 New Sounds

FILM

- 34 American Splendor
- 35 Cabin Fever
- 36 The Good, the Bad and the Ugly
- 37 Swimming Pool
- 38 Film Weekly

ARTS

- 40 The Four Seasons/The Firebird
- 41 Kinetics
- 42 Theatre Notes
- 43 Arts Weekly
- 45 Free Will Astrology

THE BACK

- 43 Events Weekly
- 45 Classifieds
- 46 Alt Sex Column
- 47 Hey Eddie!

FRONT

We've got the whole world in our stands • 10



MUSIC

Luther Wright explains where he went Wrong • 31



yourVUE

Pope no "sonuvabitch," says reader

How can anyone that has any righteousness ever comprehend Richard Burnett's accusations ["Please don't Judas me," Three Dollar Bill, August 7-13]? Attacking Pope John Paul with his chosen words "sonuvabitch" and "bastard." What a crime, much worse than throwing a pie in the face of our premier Ralph Klein's face, and what are they doing to this young man, he is being prosecuted. What about you, sir, should you not be prosecuted for writing such things about a great leader of millions? Choosing such outrageous words to insult a great leader. This demands correction. Surely, someone as yourself is smart enough to realize you have freedom to choose better words! Also you should realize the seriousness of your chosen words! Pope John Paul is right and we are

proud that he is defending what is right from wrong.

Marriage was, and will always be between one man and one woman ONLY, whether we like it or not. It is a covenant between "man & women" to procreate the human race. Those that wish or choose to do otherwise are wrong and will always be until the end of time. The same sex union is ONLY a cover up for their wrongdoings. They then think that they are OK, but it does not make it right no matter who says so. The laws of nature cannot be changed. Surely you know that it is the Pope's right to defend that, and thank God he is doing it. All of us should join him in defending this truth including you sir. No matter how gifted you may be, you have no right to belittle others. Make this world a better place please and apologize to your readers for your wrong choice of words describing the Pope.

A copy of this letter along with your article will be forwarded to Rome. Let them decide what can be done to stop this. —MARIE DOUIECK, EDMONTON

ARTS

Barbecued wings:
choreographing
The Firebird • 40



A feeble excuse for a band

Lisa Gregoire wrote a great article about Winnipeg's the Weakerthans ["Fables of the Reconstruction," September 4-10]. They are smart, and their music is great. They are an understated punk band and will do well with Epitaph. It's just too bad that they're jerks. (I thought about using other words, but hey, this is a free paper, what if a kid picks it up?)

Here's the story of why. We made a movie this year called *Turnback* and, like all movies, ours has a soundtrack. When we started picking music we had two considerations: (a) Canada has a lot of *incredible* bands who don't get played enough so we should use some, it could be mutually beneficial and fun; and (b) we have no money, but we'll pay what (and if) we can.

We decided to approach the Weakerthans. We love their music and felt an affinity with a group of artists from another underappreciated blue-collar

SEE PAGE 6

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Gays stand against government Goliath

Local activists prepare their slingshots in the fight for same-sex marriage

BY MURRAY SINCLAIR

Alberta homosexuals lobbying for same-sex marriage have "a bit of a challenge," says Michael Phair, a gay—and, it appears, understated—Edmonton city councillor.

Premier Ralph Klein's Tories have a long record of resisting gay rights, governing a province with deep petro-dollars pockets, where conservative parties have historically held a stranglehold on power. Nonetheless, Phair says, there are homosexual Albertans and others in the province who support same-sex marriage. "That voice needs to be heard. It's really more important to organize here, because there's a sense no one cares about it here."

Today's gay-marriage debate recalls the Delwin Vriend case of the '90s, when local homosexuals helped a gay teacher fired from an Alberta Christian college fight the Klein government all the way to the federal Supreme Court. The court said Alberta's human rights laws were incompatible with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms by excluding sexual orientation as a basis for discrimination, a decision Klein reluctantly accepted. "Once again, it's a David and Goliath battle," says local gay rights activist Murray Billett. "What's different now is that David has his big brother along," he adds, referring to the federal government.

After an Ontario court legalized same-sex marriage in that province this summer, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien's governing Liberals drafted a same-sex marriage law, which Parliament will vote on following a Supreme

Court review. Alberta is joining conservative religious groups opposing the law in court, and Klein said he would try to exempt the province from same-sex marriages using the Charter's notwithstanding clause.

Billett calls Klein's plan "shameful, and embarrassing" to both Canada and Alberta, since the world is carefully watching the "historical global leadership role" on homosexual rights that the country is taking. "Taxpayers should be outraged about how much money and how much effort [Klein] is spending against so

few people," he says. "What hurts our community and our families is that we pay twice. Our tax dollars are being spent to fight our own community on a very fundamental human rights issue."

Pointing to money needed to fight in court and public, Billett adds, "We shouldn't have to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to get the same rights as other taxpayers."

CITING WHAT WAS gained in the Vriend case, he charges the Klein government with ignoring its own human rights legislation. Alberta's position even goes against the government's pro-business mentality. Billett says, as potential gay entrepreneurs are discouraged from investing in the province. Phair says he knows of a local gay couple who decided to tie the knot in British Columbia, where same-sex marriage is also legal, joining other gay couples from throughout North America in taking their wedding-related dollars away from Alberta.

Discrimination against gays and lesbians exists worldwide, according to Billett, and he doesn't think Alberta is any more homophobic

movie make them jerks? Not in and of itself. What makes them jerks is that even though we share a mutual friend, even though they started out with mostly nothing in the middle of nowhere, working hard to get people to notice them (Samson slugged it out with Protagonist for 10 years prior to the Weak-thans), even though Samson says "I think the underclass in society... whose stories aren't told are the most interesting" and even though according to Greigore, "Samson is far from pretentious," they wouldn't even give us an answer. They hadn't asked Paul to e-mail us or said sorry or anything. (I wouldn't dare to imagine that they'd bother to e-mail or call or write us—they're busy dicks.)

So it's too bad that they're too cool for us. Because Buck 65, Sage Francis, Ben's Symphonic Orchestra and Richard Walters all thought that they'd help us out. For free, for now because it takes nothing to say yes, and it's what makes for a healthier, more positive, more vibrant artistic culture.

Samson's not getting regular rotation on MuchMusic and that's too bad. It probably is because it ranks "too low on the titty tally," but why should he expect support from Cana-

than elsewhere. He's glad the same-sex marriage issue is in the news, as it "brings it up at the breakfast table. Albertans have to ask, 'How does it affect me?' If they think about it, there's zero impact. It doesn't affect what they believe or where they go to church. It takes nothing away from their lives and their world."

Homosexuals do the same day-to-day things as everyone else, from paying off mortgages to going to church and praying. Billett says: "There's room for everyone in the province. Just treat us all the same. Equality is about having the same choices and opportunities as all other Albertans. To suggest it's not smacks of the separate-but-equal notion of apartheid. Orientation supremacy is as wrong as any other type of supremacy."

Billett says he and other public members of Edmonton's homosexual community have received hate mail and abusive phone calls in reaction to their activism. "The vitriolic behaviour of small-minded people, I will never understand. How can they hate us when they don't know us?"

POINTING TO the high rate of teenage homosexual suicide, he brings up the hypothetical example of a 15-year-old boy struggling with coming out of the closet, in arguing that the province's position has "social implications." After hearing Klein and Justice Minister Dave Hancock speak out against gay people getting married, Billett asks, "What does that tell him if he's anxiety-ridden and ready to kill himself? The government's message may be enough to push another member of our community to take their life."

Jason Chance, an Alberta Justice spokesman, rejects Billett's scenario. "To suggest that the premier or justice minister would consciously or unconsciously push someone to take their own life," Chance says, "is extreme

dian artistic institutions (no matter how circumspect) if he's not willing to do the same." —IAN ROWE, PRODUCER/EDITOR, THE DRAFT SIX

Your Vue

Continued from page 4

prairie town with low-self esteem. (It's a feeling that Winnipeg and Eville share: we doubt our own talent and ability even though both cities have produced internationally recognized artists.)

We also had an in! One of their friends is our friend—Mr. Paul Anthony, comedian, longtime companion of Winnipeg's the Crumbs and former prairie boy turned Vancouverite. Paul is in our movie; it's not a big part, but it's an ensemble piece, so there you go. We sent Paul and the Weakerthans a friendly letter (so Canadian) and a trailer cut to a song of theirs (from *Left and Leaving*)—we had no intention of using their new stuff, just pre-Epitaph out-for-years stuff). We even added a bonus video of Paul destroying his ankle while on set. (Sorry, Paul.) We knew this was a bit of a shot in the dark, but felt that our odds were good.

We heard nothing. NOTHING. After a few e-mails Paul let us know that they get "a lot" of requests for this kind of thing and weren't interested. So, does not wanting to be in our

and unjustified." He adds that Alberta's Adult Interdependent Relationships Act, passed in 2001, provides equality rights and responsibilities to all couples, such as those in common-law relationships. Klein is supporting most Albertans, who feel that marriage limited to being between a man and a woman has a traditional, historic and religious significance, Chance says.

THANKS TO E-MAILS, petitions and community gatherings, Billett says the pro-gay-marriage side has been organizing "very well in a short time." At a September 9 organizational meeting for the Edmonton gay community, for instance, about 30 of the 80 attendees volunteered to help educate local homosexuals and the public about same-sex marriage, and Billett says homosexuals aren't the only ones seeking a new marriage definition—a larger "rainbow coalition" of liberal-minded churches and minority groups is taking up the fight as well.

The same-sex bill will be put to a free vote, meaning MPs don't have to tow party lines, and Billett says that makes lobbying critical. With an election expected next year, it's possible the debate may get ugly and the bill may not pass, but he promised homosexuals would continue their efforts to legalize gay marriage. Local activists will join national groups such as Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere to lobby the city's two Liberal cabinet members and handful of MPs with the Canadian Alliance, which is against same-sex marriage. "We will demand that they justify state-sanctioned discrimination," Billett says.

Recalling failed past efforts to lobby the provincial government, Billett says the homosexual community isn't going to try this time. "The mind is like a parachute. It works best when open. This government is working with a packed parachute." ■

seems to have spent too much time doing "research" and not enough living. She said in the article, "Alberta's feminist movement has faded away." Wouldn't that be a good thing? Mmm, doesn't that tell you that men face issues also, and that most women know they don't have it so bad?

It does not take a Ph.D. to figure that out. Modern feminism is not about equality even though feminists say it is. What a way to sell a book! This reminds me of a *New York Times* book review or something. But I guess even washed-up feminists selling books have to eat, too! Keep the lovers, send the haters off to Mars.

Thanks for listenin' to my rant. —

"JASPER," VIA E-MAIL

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Ms.-anthropy

Lisa Gregoire's story about feminism in Alberta ["Province of struggle," September 4-10] was weak. Lois Harder



MARIJUANA

Blunt words from Jack Layton

TORONTO—Federal NDP leader Jack Layton pulled his gloves off in an attack on Liberal MPs, whom he accused of going outside the country to lobby against relaxed pot laws in Canada.

In a guest column published in the *Toronto Star* intended to pressure Liberal leadership favourite Paul Martin on the issue of parliamentary reform, Layton took Liberal MPs Dan McTeague and Brenda Chamberlain to task over their alleged guerrilla realpolitik strategy against marijuana decriminalization. "Marijuana users may be tempted to thank Liberal MPs Brenda Chamberlain and Dan McTeague for relaxed pot laws," Layton wrote. "But they may be annoyed to learn these same MPs met privately with the U.S. drug czar, urging him to threaten Canada with trade sanctions if the proposed pot law proceeds. McTeague's logic is particularly tortured.... On marijuana, he has no apparent qualm with urging foreign officials to block Parliament's democratic will. Fortunately for him, times have changed and he is guilty only of hypocrisy, not treason."

Layton's accusations come after both of the Liberals publicly denied allegations that they egged Crane to tell his American superiors to send a strong message to Ottawa that it will face repercussions if Canada continues on the path to decriminalizing simple possession of marijuana.

Both Chamberlain and McTeague attended an July meeting between key Liberal party members and Barry Crane, deputy director for supply reduction at the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. Chamberlain said the purpose of the meeting with Crane was to discover if Americans would make security tighter at the border—increasing headaches for Canadian exporters—as Canada relaxed marijuana laws.

"We need to know if there are going to be [impacts from decriminalization]," Chamberlain told the *Guelph Mercury*. "That's important in the decision-making process."

There could be some merit to Chamberlain's argument—the meeting occurred as U.S. president George W. Bush installed Karen Tandy as the head of America's Drug Enforcement Agency. Outgoing administrator Asa Hutchinson had been critical of Canada's decriminalization plan, but Tandy is seen by politicos as the toughest, hardliner ever to lead the DEA. As a prosecutor, Tandy became famous for crusading against medical marijuana users in Oregon and California and she has made it no secret that she considers the export of Canadian marijuana to the United States a major problem.

Layton, as a former civic politician in the city, has some pull in Toronto. But it is remarkable to see the *Star*, easily the biggest Liberal bastion in the Canadian press (even with the Asper's



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family control of CanWest Global), run an open letter openly blasting the party that the paper has unabashedly supported since it first came off the printing press. —STEVEN SANDOR

LECTURES

Sights unseen

EDMONTON—Brian Harris has been called the Norman Rockwell of Tibet. He's described as a man who takes pictures of the way things were, removing modern knapsacks from view and selecting an angle so the powerlines don't show. But Harris is unapologetic about how he pursues his craft. For the last 15 years, he's been traveling from his home in Vancouver to Tibet to take pictures of the people and the land, raising nearly \$250,000 for Seva Canada, a non-profit that works on sight restoration and blindness prevention in developing countries such as Nepal, India and Tibet.

"Despite the mirror-like nature of photography, I am not primarily interested in social realism," says Harris, whose *Himalayan Visions and Tibetan Voices* show is coming to Edmonton on Saturday, September 13. "I am attempting to depict, in what I refer to as 'intimate cultural portraiture,' the inherent qualities and conditions of Buddhist Himalayan culture and how this traditional culture is an integral foundation for the spiritual life."

That's a mouthful, to be sure. But consider his goal (to chronicle a culture that will soon disappear) and the cause he's supporting (more than 90 per cent of the world's 45 million blind people live in poverty, and 80 per cent of this blindness is either preventable or correctable); it gives the photos Harris shoots a deeper meaning. "From a deeper point of view," he says, "I am not the real artist here. It's the Himalayan Buddhist culture that is the true artist. I just happen to be passing by."

Himalayan Visions and Tibetan Voices, a 90-minute multimedia show featuring more than 250 of Harris's

images accompanied by music and sacred sounds, will be at Metro Cinema on September 13 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets, available at the door and Mountain Equipment Co-op, cost \$15. For more information, go to www.seva.ca/tour.

Looking for a Buddhist fix this week but can't make it out on Saturday? Tonight (Thursday) at 7 p.m. at downtown's Stanley Milner Library Theatre, Kushok Lobsang Dhamchoe, who studied at the Dalai Lama's monastery for 30 years, will be giving a talk called *Managing Modern-Day Stress from a Tibetan Buddhist Perspective*. Kushok, who now lives in Edmonton, will discuss topics such as how to achieve inner peace as our lives spin out of control. Tickets cost \$25, \$15-for students and seniors. —DAN RUBINSTEIN

FIRE

Insurers balk at new policies in fire-ravaged regions

KELOWNA, B.C.—With so many forest fires threatening and/or destroying homes from Blairmore, Alberta all the way to the Okanagan Valley, home and cabin owners throughout the region will likely want to top up or get home insurance. But while the Insurance Bureau of Canada is urging all insurers to renew all existing homeowners in the affected area or similar high-risk forested regions, it admits that people looking for first-time insurance on a high-risk property may be out of luck.

"We have determined that insurers are automatically renewing policies for all existing customers, including those at imminent risk," said Lindsay Olson, vice-president of the IBC's Pacific Region. "We realize that this is a time of great distress for all those affected by the fires. Our industry takes our obligations in these situations very seriously, and we will be doing everything we can to help just as quickly as possible."

But a press release designed to calm those already insured in the high-distress areas contained a veiled warning for those without insurance. "Another issue

generating many questions is that of new policies and renewals in threatened areas," stated the IBC material. "While those who have not had insurance in the past may find it difficult to find coverage immediately in these areas, the industry believes that there is an onus on insurers to take care of their existing clients."

If this statement is to be taken at face value, those who don't currently have insurance may be considered too high a risk to take on—and if they do find an insurer, chances are it won't come cheap. —STEVEN SANDOR

BUSINESS

Jammers now offer runners

VANCOUVER—Adding yet another level of irony to its muddled anti-consumption message, *Adbusters* is getting into the running shoe business.

The *Adbusters* Media Foundation, which publishes the slick, image-centric magazine, plans to challenge Nike with a Black Spot sneaker that will represent "a new kind of activist cool," *Adbusters* founder Kalle Lasn told the *Globe and Mail*. The shoe will look a low-cut Converse Chuck Taylor—remember, Nike bought Converse this summer—with the *Adbusters* culture-jamming black spot logo in place of a brand name.

"I see this as a sort of step up in activism," Lasn said to the *Globe*, "where instead of just sniping at the heels of these large companies that are not quite living up to civil society's standards, we are actually competing with them. It could be a major new step with how activists deal these rogue companies, as I call them."

In order to compete with its initial run of 10,000 shoes, which will cost \$50 to \$60 a pair, *Adbusters* is looking at signing a deal with a Third World factory. But don't worry; it won't be a sweatshop, according to Lasn. Although he does feel that "the sweatshop rhetoric has gone a little bit too far" and that "a lot of this 'Let's do it locally' is just a lot of trade union, old lefty talk." —DAN RUBINSTEIN



BY LISA GREGOIRE

That's me in the corner

I first heard R.E.M. in university in the late '80s. They were one of the first bands given the now-hackneyed title of "alternative rock." Michael Stipe, with his emotive vocals, lefty political ideals and ambiguous sexuality, was a perfect icon for us recalcitrant twentysomethings. "What if we give it away?" Stipe asked on 1986's *Lifes Rich Pageant*. I wanted to ask him that question 10 years later when the band signed an \$80-million deal with Warner Records.*

But I suppressed my creeping suspicions of sellout, comforted by stories of how the band gave generously to charities and social causes. Anyway, you can't fault a band for success. When I heard R.E.M. was launching a North American tour in Vancouver on the Labour Day weekend, I was jacked. I was one of the first 2,000 to buy a ticket online, which granted me access to the "gold zone," a B.C. Bud-hazy coral of drunks and scenesters in front of the stage which I eventually abandoned on account of the wearisome R.E.M. karaoke from teary-eyed fans. But back near the porta-potties at UBC's Thunderbird Stadium, I started losing my religion.

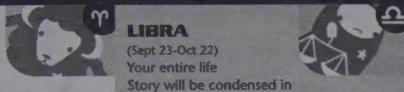
Stipe's repeated mentions of the band's website, the \$60 hoodies at the merch table and the stage backdrop—crowded with giant glittery faces of the three remaining band members and a mock-up of their upcoming album—were disappointing enough. But when Stipe dedicated a song to the record company execs in the crowd, I laughed out loud. The show, with its CD-quality perfection and rehearsed choreography, had all the spontaneity of an Edmonton city council meeting. A big machine designed to sell the R.E.M. brand. How sad.

It's enough to make a music fan cynical. Lately it's tough to be otherwise. On Tuesday, I heard that Ticketmaster is going to start auctioning event tickets to the highest bidder by year's end. And Universal Music Canada is slashing the price of CDs to help counteract Internet file sharing, which just proves they've been gouging us for years.

And so, while my childhood heroes fall into the new music order, I look to the sunken eyes of Jeff Tweedy. Wilco's set opening for R.E.M., with its shrieking feedback, stage glitches and the raspy cries of a baggy-assed, stained-shirted Tweedy, was, to borrow a phrase from Canadian indie rocker Scott Merritt, a beautiful mess. In contrast to R.E.M.'s tidy glam, Wilco's set seemed ever on the verge of unravelling. No corporate dedications. No website plugs. Stipe was right. It's the end of the world as we know it. And I feel fine. ☺

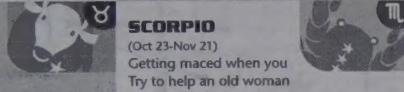
Haiku Horoscope

ARIES
Mar 21-Apr 19
You aren't a rock star
You need another excuse
To act so stupid



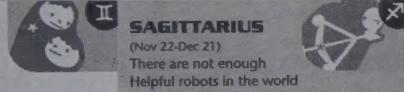
LIBRA
(Sept 23-Oct 22)
Your entire life
Story will be condensed in
An emoticon

TAURUS
Apr 20-May 20
Magic markers are
Not as impressive as some
Other magic tricks



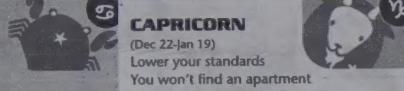
SCORPIO
(Oct 23-Nov 21)
Getting maced when you
Try to help an old woman
Is its own reward

GEMINI
May 21-June 20
Make love, not war that
You will inevitably
Lose to the penguins



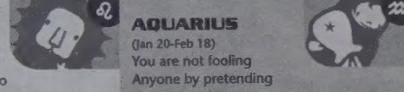
SAGITTARIUS
(Nov 22-Dec 21)
There are not enough
Helpful robots in the world
Make a career change

CANCER
(June 21-July 22)
Resistance may be
Futile but it can be a
Good way to meet girls



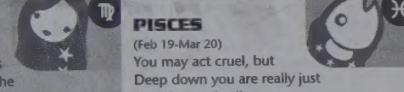
CAPRICORN
(Dec 22-Jan 19)
Lower your standards
You won't find an apartment
That comes with hot girls

LEO
(July 23-Aug 22)
The only thing to
Fear is that crazy man who
Thinks he's a wombat



AQUARIUS
(Jan 20-Feb 18)
You are not fooling
Anyone by pretending
You are not insane

VIRGO
(Aug 23-Sept 22)
Learn something new this
Week, like how to avoid the
Bear trap in the yard



PISCES
(Feb 19-Mar 20)
You may act cruel, but
Deep down you are really just
Heartless and evil

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Carbonated... and contaminated

Toxics-tainted drinks create a backlash against Coke and Pepsi in India

BY MIRANDA KENNEDY

Coca-Cola isn't keeping it real in India. Neither is its fierce rival, Pepsi. North America's most beloved brands are facing a firestorm of criticism for dangerously high levels of pesticide residues in their locally-made sodas.

The well-respected research group, the Center for Science and Environment (CSE) in New Delhi, has found traces of lindane, malathion, chlorpyrifos and even the banned DDT in Indian-bottled Pepsi and Coca-Cola drinks. CSE says pesticide levels in the Indian samples are respectively 36 and 30 times higher than European Union safety standards. And not surprisingly, when the same group tested bottles sold in the United States, they were pesticide-free.

When the toxic-cola report hit Indian papers, Hindu nationalist activists smashed Coke and Pepsi bottles in the streets and tore down advertising billboards. Members of the Indian parliament immediately ordered a ban on the products in their canteen and even threatened to revoke Coke and Pepsi's licenses if the claims were verified. Universities across the country stopped supplying the sodas, while bottling plants were sealed off in some states.

Like many other multinationals, Coke has had a rocky relationship with the Indian government. In the late 1970s, the government kicked the company out of the country for refusing to locally manufacture its secret syrup. In 1993, Coke re-entered the Indian market on the heels of its rival Pepsi with a vengeance. Of the 200 countries where the drink is sold worldwide, India is now its fastest-growing market.

Today, the Atlanta-headquartered Coca-Cola and New York-based PepsiCo enjoy an absolute duopoly in the Indian soft drink market. Together they own all 12 brands of sodas tested by CSE. So it's no wonder that the two companies, despite their fierce rivalry, immediately closed ranks and threatened legal action against CSE. Nor was it surprising when the U.S. embassy in New Delhi spoke out in defense of the two American companies, describing them in the media as highly reputable and responsible firms.

TO SETTLE the controversy, the Indian government decided to expedite its own tests of the products, even as the companies panicked about falling sales. The verdict released last week was mixed but not lethal for the U.S. multinationals. The Indian health minister told parliament that while the government also found pesticide residues in the soft drinks, the levels fell within national standards for packaged drinking water and were, therefore, safe to drink.

Relieved, both Pepsi and Coke immediately ramped up a public relations campaign aimed at wooing back the Indian public. They held a joint press conference, where the Indian CEOs of the local subsidiary posed for cameras clutching bottles of their respective brands. Pepsi placed ads in the national papers advising consumers to "refresh your faith and don't hold back your taste buds." Soft drink vendors hung posters proclaiming "Coca-Cola refreshes you with world-class and safe products in India."

Well, not quite. "The reason we found differences between U.S. and Indian products," explains Sunita Narain, the head of CSE, "is because these industries are regulated in the U.S. but not in India. The companies may say we have global standards, but this is not true. There are no global standards." Most countries, including the U.S., do not have standards for soft drinks. While the companies test individual ingredients for toxics according to global standards, they

NEWS

follow local standards for the bottled drinks' main ingredient: water.

In the U.S. and EU, water used in soft drinks and bottled water is stringently monitored. Indian water standards, however, are shockingly low. The water is only required to be "potable," a word whose meaning is not legally defined. Ground water processing is completely unregulated, and the two companies have not voluntarily set any standards for their products.

WHILE COKE AND PEPSI may have emerged relatively unscathed from the cola wars, the political battle is far from over. The health minister's announcement caused a furor in parliament, with MPs accusing the Hindu nationalist BJP government of being paid off by Coke and Pepsi. The presence of multinational companies remains a sensitive subject in India. And Coca-Cola's other practices are not likely to help its cause.

The largest Coca-Cola plant in India has also been accused of putting thousands of farmers out of work by draining the water that feeds their wells and poisoning the land with waste sludge. The plant in the southern state of Kerala, which uses one million litres of water a day, has been the target of protests from the local village council that is calling for its closure. Furthermore, the state's Pollution Control Board recently found cadmium at toxic levels in sludge samples from the plant. The plant has been distributing this sludge as "organic fertilizer" to local farmers. The pollution board asked Coke to stop emitting sludge from the factory, but the company continues to claim their waste makes a good "soil conditioner."

Environmental groups have long complained that giants like Coke and Pepsi callously disregard the public's well-being. Sunita Narain of CSE says she targeted the Indian government rather than Coca-Cola or Pepsi simply because any efforts to control and

regulate multinationals have always failed. She hopes the government will discover their regulatory backbone and force multinationals to comply with tighter norms. But Ravi Agarwal, director of Toxics Link in Delhi, says the onus falls squarely on the companies irrespective of local standards: "It is the government's responsibility to provide essential foods," he argues, "but Coke and Pepsi are brands that go beyond food value. They are responsible for upholding their own international standards."

APART FROM REGULATION, consumer boycotts are often the best check on corporate misconduct, but it isn't clear whether the bad publicity will affect Coke and Pepsi sales in India. Kailash, whose small bakery in New Delhi is bright with blue Pepsi signs, says he's still feeling the effects. "Sales have gone down, way down," he sighs. He has stopped stocking glass bottles, the most popular way to buy cola in India. "If the doctor tells you 'You are going to die,' you are scared," he says. "Then when the doctor tells you 'Now you are okay,' do you just turn around and believe him?" Others like Gauri, an M.B.A. student, have decided to take the leap of faith. As she flips open a can of Diet Coke in one of the capital's bustling markets, Gauri admits that she and her friends stopped drinking the sodas after the first report. "But Coke is a big company and it's been around for so long," she says. "I presume that the company would follow health standards, even in a country like India."

Sadly, however, for many, toxic pollution is just a fact of daily life. "We know there are pesticides in everything," shrugs 19-year-old Rahul. "There are pesticides in the soil. Through the soil we get fruit, we get the vegetables that we eat."

THERE MAY, however, well be a silver lining in this tale of corporate neglect. Prompted by an earlier study by CSE that found unsafe pesticide levels in bottled water (including some owned by Coke and Pepsi), the government voted to adopt the EU's standard for bottled water as of January 2004. Now, thanks to the toxic-soda controversy, the Indian government is moving toward setting enforceable water regulations. "We have to fix certain safety standards," admits Prasad Rao, the Indian health minister. "Today, water is not included in our Prevention of Food Adulteration act which guides food standards. We have to revise our norms for drinking water."

In other good news, Nepal and other neighbouring South Asian countries have begun testing their locally-bottled Coke and Pepsi for toxics. And while many Indians have started drinking soda again, experts like Agarwal believe that the debacle is actually a defining moment for food safety and consumer awareness in this country. ☐

Miranda Kennedy is a writer and radio journalist based in New Delhi.

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media jungle

BY KRISTINE OWRAM

Stands in the place where you live

I'm not a big cigar smoker and I don't read many magazines, so it wasn't until last year, despite living in Edmonton my entire life, that I took my first step inside Hub Cigar and Newsstand. The first thing that struck me was the shop's historic atmosphere, I could tell as soon as I entered that both the newsstand and building were ancient. One of my first clues was a banner spanning half a wall advertising the *Toronto Star Weekly*, a national newspaper that folded more than three decades ago. The floor, I noticed, slopes dramatically towards the back of the shop. And because it was winter, the place was absolutely freezing.

According to Ken Knowles, who's owned the newsstand since 1965, there's nothing but dirt under the thin linoleum. A glass of water placed on the floor in winter, he says, will freeze in less than two hours. But because the city has deemed the 19th-century building on Whyte Avenue a historical site, there are severe restrictions on major renovations. Knowles says that the first renovations ever done to the building happened only two years ago, when the landlord had it rewired for the first time.

"Before that, it still had the original wiring," he says. "So if you wanted to plug something in, you would have to unplug something else first. This building needs a lot more work, though, because it's starting to shift. In the spring it shifts one way and in the winter it shifts another, so we have to have the doors realigned twice a year."

A newsstand that's been in business since 1911 in a building that was built in 1894 to outfit gold prospectors on their way to the Klondike may not be the best working environment in the world, but it certainly provides an interesting shopping atmosphere. Hub Cigar employees know many customers by name and the store has the air of a community centre, a place where regulars meet and chat about news or sports scores before buying pipe tobacco or their favourite specialty magazine.

Hub Cigar is an anomaly in Edmonton, though, and large, specialized newsstands are increasingly a remnant of the past. Throughout Canada, they're being uprooted by chains like Chapters and Costco that sell major newspapers and magazines at a discount that independent retailers can't compete with.

The heyday of Edmonton newsstands was in the early 20th century, when a number of prosperous years allowed for a degree of specialization not seen in the general stores of the pioneer community's past. From 1911 to 1914, eight newsstands opened in Edmonton, including Hub Cigar and Mike's News at the corner of Jasper Avenue and 101 Street, a name that should be familiar to anyone who lived in the city before the mid-1980s. These newsstands quickly became some of



Edmonton's most recognizable institutions and, more importantly, gathering places. Mike's News was a perfect example of a newsstand that evolved into a community centre, due mainly to owner John Michaels's involvement in Edmonton's social and economic life.

A New Yorker, John "Mike" Michaels opened Mike's in 1912. Michaels was an astute businessman and quickly became a prominent Edmontonian; he was also an extraordinarily charitable man. In addition to operating the city's most successful newsstand until his death in 1962, he ran a wholesale newspaper and magazine distribution centre, started a band for his newsboys to keep them out of trouble and served an annual Christmas dinner to homeless war veterans—a tradition that continued long after his death, thanks to a fund he established.

Mike's News was just one of many prominent newsstands around Edmonton in the early years of the 20th century. During World War I, another newsstand, Dominion Cigar, hired a painter to write the headlines on the side of its building every morning so citizens would only have to walk down the street to catch the latest news. The glory days of Edmonton newsstands began to fade, however, in the '60s and '70s. In 1940, 14 newsstands were listed in the city's directory; by 1980, there were only four. Mike's News held on longer than most, but it changed hands in 1978 and, after being forced to change locations twice in three years, it finally went out of business in 1986.

Today, it's reasonable to say that Edmonton's only remaining old-style newsstand is Hub Cigar. (Front Page on Jasper Avenue may look similar inside, but owner Brent Johnson opened the store just 10 years ago, recognizing the market for a large downtown newsstand.) So how has Hub Cigar managed to survive for so long? Knowles guesses that the shop's relative success has to do with its

willingness to accommodate and adapt to changing customer desires. "I think it's because if people want something, we'll bring it in," he says. "About 10 to 12 years ago, people of different ethnic groups started coming into the store and asking if we could get Spanish or German or Creole papers, so we started carrying a lot of specialty and foreign magazines that other newsstands don't. Soon, word got around, and that end of our business really turned up. On top of that, we carry over 200 different newspapers. If we just carried the run-of-the-mill stuff that everybody else carries, we'd probably be out of business by now."

Knowles does concede, however, that business isn't as good as it used to be—and he says that the city's other old-style newsstands probably failed because of the same factors now affecting sales at Hub Cigar. "Going by my grandkids," he says, "I think the younger generation is on computers all the time now, so they're starting to get all their information that way. I don't know much about computers; I've never even turned one on, in fact. But I think we're losing some of our business to people who are getting their news off the Internet in the morning instead of picking up a newspaper."

Front Page's Johnson agrees. "There's a lower demand for newspapers today and they're becoming more expensive as a result," he says. "Back when Mike's was still around, they used to sell stacks of newspapers, and even we used to sell a lot more five or six years ago."

Beyond alternate news sources, Knowles worries about outlets like Chapters and Costco, as well as the large grocery chains that now carry a wide selection of popular newspapers and magazines. "Places like Costco discount some of the stuff we bring in so much that we just can't compete," he says. "We need to make a certain per-

SEE NEXT PAGE



infinite
lives

BY DARREN ZENKO

From doodling to dueling

Okay, well, this is a nice picture, isn't it? Just turned 30 years old, sticky residue from a birthday tonic-water attack matting my too-long hair, bits of chocolatey fudge (telltale from the most poorly executed face-caking ever) still being picked out of odd places, joints more or less permanently locked in arthritic place after passing out in a catalogue-casual sitting position while watching old *Star Trek* cartoons—the first tragically dehydrated morning of Real (and we mean it this time) Adulthood, and I'm spending it creating magical creatures with the help of an enchanted fairy, then forcing those creatures to fight in the Arena of Death.

Hallucination? I wish—the reality of *Magic Pengel* addiction is damn hard to face. "Addictiveness" has always been a feature of monster-raising and monster-battle games and toys, from bleeping *Tamagotchi*s through *Pokémon*, *Digimon* and *Koreanbootlegmon*, and lots of cool gimmicks have shown up in this cracklike subgenre; the *Monster Rancher* series, for example, lets

you use your CD collection as a near-infinite library of monster DNA, making for hours-long sessions of figuring out what strange battle-beast lurks within each and every album you own. But even *Monster Rancher*, which postulates a mind-bending alternate reality in which Diana Krall is tougher than all four members of KISS put together, can't compare to the devilish joys of *Magic Pengel*.

Basically, what this PlayStation 2 title lets you do is create your own absolutely unique monsters/creatures/things in fully animated 3D. This isn't some Lego-style construction set or create-a-beast toolkit with a workbench of stock parts to mix 'n' match; *Magic Pengel* players get to build their creations from the ground up, using a ridiculously simple and flexible 3D drawing tool. It's kind of tough to explain without showing you how it works—I know I was skeptical when I first heard about it—but developer Taito has managed to create a deep, robust three-dimensional doodling tool that's as easy to use as, say, MSPaint or any other basic 2D sketch program. There's a bit of a learning curve, thanks in part to a manual that's a bit too basic, but once you get the hang of it the results are amazing; not even 20 minutes after I decided to create Darth Vader, there he was, complete with hovering interrogation droid.

Other doodles (that's what the game calls them) I dashed off with glee include an AT-AT with a snowspeeder flying around it; Bob the Angry Flower; a huge Bible

answering to the name of "Thumper"; Jesus; Satan; a deathbot with sawblade hands; a psychic little girl who throws furniture; a spiked blob (I got lazy); a hulking, naked Amazon wielding a tree branch; the Angel of Death; a bust of Prince Charles; a Lamborghini; the god Ganesh; the Old Dutch logo; and, of

series of battles that follow a rather boring storyline set in a universe of saccharine cuteness. Not that it matters; *Magic Pengel* is such a wonderful toy that it doesn't really need to be a good game. A toy is something to be played with, an entertainment without a definite object; a game is something to be played through, toward a set goal. The only real reason to play through *Magic Pengel*'s plot is to expand the capabilities of the doodling tool, and the effort is worth it. With every round won, there's an expansion to the toolset that adds whole new layers of potential in the creation of your what-ers. This setup actually works out great; the availability of new tools progresses at the same rate as your skill at using them—in essence, the entire first half of the game is a 3D drawing tutorial.

Maybe this'll sound weird, but I put *Magic Pengel* in the same category as *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*. They both have rare permanent places in my constantly traded-in game collection because they'll always be fun to pull out and play with as toys. Sometimes you want to go on a five-star rocket-launcher rampage and sometimes you want to see if you can work up fightin' 3D renditions of *Star Wars* characters and major deities. It all depends on your mood. But this casual approach doesn't come right away—like *GTA*, *Magic Pengel* presents long hours of hopeless addiction before settling down into "diversion" status. ☺



course, a giant throbbing dink that uses its testicles to walk around.

These creations are then deployed in battle against computer opponents and... well, "and" nothing; that's about all there is to the "game" part of this game. It's a more or less linear

Media Jungle

Continued from previous page

centage to stay in business and if we discounted like that, we wouldn't even be able to pay our staff." (Johnson, for his part, doesn't see Chapters that much of a threat, possibly because there's no location down the road from his shop. "The first five years we were in business was growth," he says, "and the next five saw a plateau, but no drops.")

Despite such dramatic changes in the industry, Knowles is optimistic about the future of Edmonton's remaining newsstands. "The one thing we can offer that places like Chapters can't is customer service," he says. "We have lots and lots of loyal customers and we probably carry at least 2,000 magazines that Chapters doesn't. Plus, if people want something, we'll bring it in. We still have people who drive in from Camrose or Wetaskiwin or Calgary once a month to pick up magazines that you can't get anywhere else in the province, and I think that's what has really saved us in the long run."

Chain stores have been pushing independent retailers out of business for years and it's always unfortunate to see an Edmontonian lose his business to a corporation. It's even more regrettable when the city loses part of its history as well, which was the case with Mike's News. Edmonton is lucky to still have Hub Cigar, but it's unlikely the shop will survive forever in the face of competition from the chains. If Hub Cigar eventually goes the way of Mike's News, the city will not only lose another part of its history, but part of its community and its atmosphere as well. ☺

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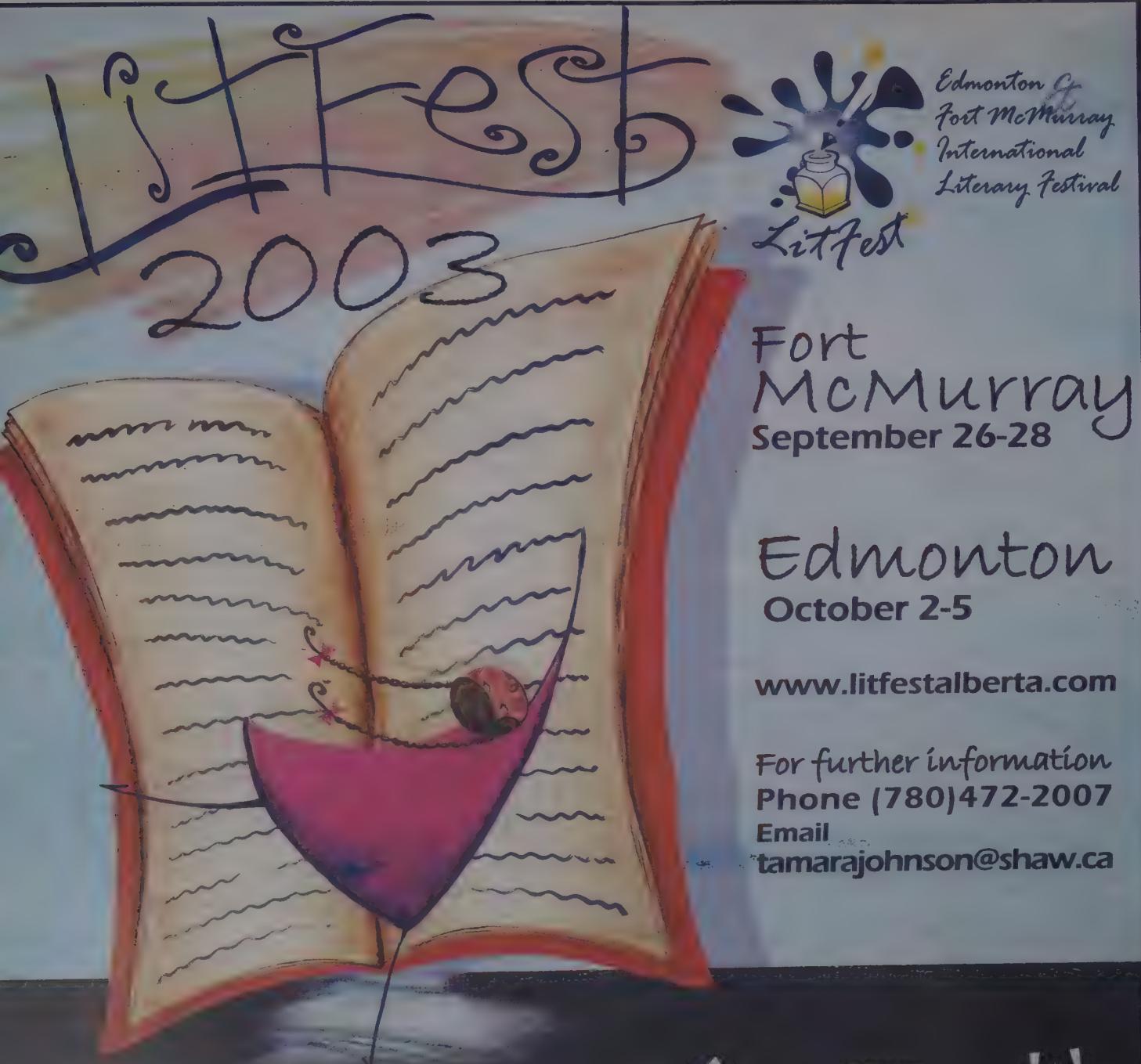
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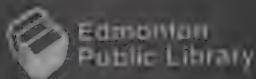
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VIEW

LEGACY



Edmonton

Don DeLillo rides a limo

Cosmopolis is a limousine tour of the dark heart of American high finance

BY JOSEF BRAUN

New York City, an April Day in the Year 2000. Don DeLillo has become such a unique progenitor of modern omen and portent that he can make the declaration of something as innocuous as a date thunder from the page like a death knell—especially when it's written in bold black caps on the first page of a slim 209-page novel.

His latest opus, *Cosmopolis*, is set mostly in or around a long white limousine gadgeted up to its gonads, and DeLillo frequently seems to ask the reader to pull over and take a good long look at every object or person we pass along the way. Like the hauntingly crystalline first section of DeLillo's recent *The Body Artist*, the careful attention to banal detail throughout *Cosmopolis* always carries within it a seed of profundity that requires some intellectual-spiritual leap on the part of the reader. Having said that, I'm not sure if *Cosmopolis* is a book with a point, because so many of its points graze past the reader so fleetingly as to make us lose sight of what it is we're doing or where we're heading. But if you can let go of your need for a clear destination (and accept the unapologetic ridiculousness of DeLillo's many strange and fantastical conceits) you're in for a transporting ride into the dark night of a rather soulless young man.

Eric Packer, a 28-year-old billion-dollar asset manager, has two things to do today: engage in a catastrophic gamble with the yen and get a haircut. The Kafkaesque nature of his seemingly unending cross-town journey to be groomed by an old family friend is diluted by the fact that Eric is hardly the victim of some bureaucratic nightmare—he sits at the very top of the bureaucratic nightmare himself, conducting all his business from his mobile castle while advisors and assistants come to meet him.

TYPICAL OF DELILLO'S protagonists, Eric is detached to the point

where his desires and actions have become nearly random. He both craves and fears a merging with the virtual world of invisible money and the tumble of information, and (apparently spurred by news from his doctor that he has an asymmetrical prostate, and from his security advisors that he's in danger of assassination) he spends much of the novel attempting to feel something that might subvert the matrix of technology, prognostication and intellectualization that controls his every moment.

Some kind of self-realization seems to be at the heart of *Cosmopolis*, though DeLillo always fights against his reader's ability to look such transgressions straight in the eye, clouding things with his apocalyptic humour and talent for odd observation. Eric's ultimate fate is stated within the first third of the book, but it's the meaning of his fate that remains slippery. (It all has something to do with knowing "how a person becomes the reflection he sees in a dusty window when he walks by.") No matter what form of extreme behaviour Eric aspires to (and he does many extreme things over the course of the book), whether he holes up in his ivory tower or escapes it all to embrace the far more anarchic world beyond his limo windows, the only satisfying result that seems to be in store for him is some sort of communion with an abstraction of self. DeLillo

continues to do amazing things with mirrors and hidden metaphors, but he also presents a fairly clean analysis of wealth, technology and disparity in the little jewels of insight that line his stark narrative. ☀

COSMOPOLIS
By Don DeLillo • Scribner • 209 pp. • \$39.50



three
dollar
bill

BY RICHARD BURNETT

Chamber of thrills

The summer of 2003 has been the gayest in the history of Canada, and I'm lovin' every second of it. Pride season may be over but still no one can escape the Fab Five in *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* (which finally debuts on the Canadian Bravo network on October 4). Then of course there's gay marriage, the one issue that Liberal PM-in-waiting Paul Martin just wishes would go away and the hot potato that right-wing Canadian Alliance opposition leader Stephen Harper is actually thanking God for. Harper even charged that the feds orchestrated their gay-marriage court losses so they could—wait for it—legalize same-sex weddings "through the back door." Yes, you read right.

But if you think the likes of Harper are apoplectic now, just wait until they turn on their TV sets during the 2006 Gay Games. Not only has Montreal's Gay Games signed a groundbreaking \$4.5 million worth of government partnerships, but last week Rendez-Vous Montreal 2006 announced Radio-Canada will air the Games' opening and closing ceremonies, as well as one hour of competition highlights every

day over eight days—a first for both the public broadcaster and the Games.

But all this talk of the Gay Games, same-sex marriage the Fab Five has precipitated a backlash of sorts. After all, Canadians remain deeply divided over gay marriage and the issue is even more contentious stateside where the U.S. Supreme Court recently struck down that nation's anti-sodomy laws.

Which is why the biggest news this week is the launch of the Canadian Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. The CGLCC pegs Canada's GLBT economy at more than \$50 billion—this in a country whose GDP *The Economist* estimates will top \$800 billion (U.S.) this year. Clearly money talks, no matter who you sleep with.

With regional gay chambers of commerce already established in Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia (where the Gay and Lesbian Business Association has been around for 31 years), CGLCC co-founder R. Bruce McDonald set out across Canada over the summer to drum up support among GLBT business owners and the corporate community, notably in Alberta and Atlantic Canada, where business people also want to establish regional gay chambers.

"I enjoyed the travel and meeting the people and it would be great if we could turn this into a self-sustaining venture," McDonald told me this week. "One of the first things I noticed traveling across Canada was there isn't any national co-operation between the groups. We don't want to waste resources [through duplication]. The corporate community has [also] recognized [gays and lesbians] as an important market and want to

know how to access it."

McDonald says none of this could have happened without the input of the Quebec Gay Chamber of Commerce's current president, Montreal lawyer Louis Charron, who spoke at the founding meeting of the Ontario Gay Chamber of Commerce three years ago. "Louis had a big part of it," McDonald explains. "He came to Ontario and said we should have a chamber, got involved, and that's how this whole adventure got started."

For his part, the modest Charron trumpets that gays and lesbians will contribute \$2.4 billion to the Montreal economy in the years leading up to the 2006 Gay Games. "It's important to have a national voice [that can help affect social and political change]," Charron says. "Look at the economic windfall of gay marriage—the last stats I have are 260 [foreign] couples have married in Toronto. Why not in Montreal or Edmonton?"

In other words, as McDonald says, "The business side of equality issues remains untouched, but it's an area even our opponents understand. They may not understand marriage issues, but they understand dollars and cents."

For Charron, though, this is a lifelong dream. "I've always wanted to do this," he says. "My heart pushed me in this direction. As a gay man you may not have kids and you want to leave your mark somewhere. This is a way for me to leave my mark and help other people. I know it sounds corny, but I feel I've been privileged in life and I'd like to share the wealth." ☀

Essential buttplug: Surf to www.cglcc.ca for Canadian gay chamber details

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The mod squad

"Case modding" allows PC owners to put a personal stamp on their old beige boxes

BY JON KALISH

The old beige box ain't what it used to be. Hobbyists are modifying the beige cases that house the digital guts of their computers, installing neon lights, extra cooling fans and retro toggle switches. These modified cases (or "case mods," as they are known in the PC world) often have windows cut into the sides of the case for a view of the computer's electronic innards. Modders put small LCD displays on their cases with readouts of CPU temperature or stock prices. Some cases have such oddities as car radios and cigarette lighters.

"If you have a computer and you smoke, that's awesome," says Troy, a 34-year-old Michigan supermarket manager who runs the Case Mod God website (www.casemodgod.com). Its motto is "Mod it till it BLEEDS!" Troy, who doesn't want his last name used, has spent more than \$1,000 (all figures in U.S. funds) modding his home PC. It has 17 fans, nine cold cathode bulbs, custom grilles and windows on every

surface of the case except the bottom.

Peruse the galleries at casemodgod.com or one of the scores of other sites dedicated to modding and you'll notice that modders also put computer components in entirely new enclosures. Wooden beer kegs,

and builder of miniatures for film and television. "To me this is taking something that was once boring and sitting under your desk and displaying it proudly."

Newbies don't need to know how to solder but "having a general knowledge of wiring is helpful," says Troy.

Still, many of the case mod websites have step-by-step instructions. No matter what you use for a case, you'll need a processor, motherboard, power supply, hard drive and CD or DVD burner. All the components plug in to each other.

Cases with windows already installed on the sides are available at online case mod stores, starting at around \$55 and running as high as \$140. The case mod galleries on the Web display custom windows cut in the shape of the *Playboy* bunny, a howling wolf and a shark, among others. Some case modders are keen on chrome mesh covers over cooling vents and flame decals on the body of the case. Others are big on radiation symbols or airbrushing scenes on the sides of mini towers.

Modders tend to install more fans inside their computers than they really need. They shell out between \$4 and \$35 per fan. (The quieter the fan, the more expensive it is.) Neon light tubes go for \$20 and typically snake through the nooks and crannies of the computer's innards. Some modders will drop \$50 on a toggle switch similar to the ones used on Lockheed Martin's F-18 fighter jets. "They're purely cosmetic," says Capello. "It's like getting new rims for your car."

Capello has enjoyed building websites because it's "a nice clean profession." But as the case modder surveys the Brooklyn apartment he shares with his fiancée, where he drills, cuts, sands and paints during his modding marathons, he sighs and remarks, "Now that I've gotten into this, the house can turn into a wreck." ☀

DESIGN

aluminum attaché cases, model cars, football helmets and cigar boxes have served as cases. One case mod was done on a 1946 bakelite radio.

TRAFFIC AT casemodgod.com skyrocketed this summer after the site ran a spread on a four-slot chrome toaster that had been modded by Adam Bertram, a network administrator at a Tennessee retirement home. Bertram's toaster PC has a

The case mod Capello is working on for Intel features a miniature fetus growing on a tendril-covered cylinder

cordless mouse and keyboard, a TV tuner and wireless network card. Bertram is planning to manufacture and market finished toaster PCs.

A 38-year-old web designer named Paul Capello has emerged something of a star in the case modding scene. He has commissions from Intel and the motherboard manufacturer MSI to create case mods for trade shows. The case mod Capello is working on for Intel is based on the movie *The Matrix Reloaded* and features a miniature fetus growing on a tendril-covered cylinder. Capello's "biohazard" case mod has a plastic skull and what looks like green radioactive waste oozing from portholes on a case done with a corroded metal finish. The computer is accompanied by mouse with skeletal parts epoxied to it.

"I've always had a gift for constructing strange things," says Capello, who has worked as a carpenter

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DISH WEEKLY

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LEGEND

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\$\$\$\$	\$30 and up

CHURRO KING

10152-82 Avenue • 989-1083

Veterans of the Old Strathcona food scene have probably been wondering just exactly what was going on with the Churro King, the tiny Latino grill on Whyte Ave just east of Calgary Trail. Well, a seemingly simple plan to renovate the restaurant turned into a nightmare that dragged out for months, with the place's doors closed all the while. "I thought it was a joke when Dad called and said we finally had the permit," says Volkhardt Caro. The beautiful touches throughout the expanded space are plucked right from the family's roots in Chile—the stucco archways, the lattice board across the ceiling with plastic grapes hanging down, the homemade kites hanging near the cash counter and the terra cotta-coloured roof tiles. They've added some wicked stuff to the menu, too, like pisco frico (deep-fried sole) and the mack daddy of all meat dishes, the Parrillas King, a barbecue for two served on a hot grill right at your table, which would've been impossible in the old setup. It contains about a kilo of meat, including top sirloin beef, chorizo, chicken and pork, served with salad and *sopaipillas*, a Chilean bread for mopping up the goodies. **Average Price:** \$ (Reviewed 04/03/03)

HIGH VOLTAGE FOOD AND COFFEE BAR

10387-63 Ave • 437-3202

It's off the beaten path in the sense that you might not think to stop there—seeing as you're likely driving past it in a car. But High Voltage is a gem, serving the best assortment of donairs you'll find on the south side. Traditional Greek, blue cheese, jerk—they're just some of the styles on the menu, in addition to a wide assortment of cold cut sandwiches, Greek specialties and vegetarian fare like spanakopita or falafel. The Chicago gyros is a must. If you haven't eaten in a few days, order the high voltage size. **Average Price:** \$ (Reviewed 03/20/03)

HONEST MUR'S BAR AND GRILL

8937-82 Avenue • 463-6397

This atmospheric Bonnie Doon pub is well worth seeking out—honest! The

charm of this place is that everyone is welcome. Besides, the football paraphernalia tacked all over the walls is an unmistakable tipoff that you're not going to have to grab a blazer out of the back of the car. Just the way I like it. I'm told that the burgers are all the rage at this joint. They even have a cafeteria-style hamburg on the menu. Honest Mur's also serves breakfast on the weekends and according to some friends of my friend Colin, it's a great spread. **Average Price:** \$\$\$ (Reviewed 12/12/02)

KRAU WILAI

9940-106 Street • 424-8308

In the downtown eatery Krau Wilai, I got to sample some of the better Thai food in icy Alberta. It was authentic indeed, though somewhat toned down in the spice department. Unlike we North Americans, Thais consider eating a group activity. No *à la carte* ordering or spacing out of course here—in Thailand, you put all the dishes on the table at once and everyone enjoys. Krau Wilai offered me a true taste of Thailand. Sweet, sour, hot; it was wild. **Average Price:** \$\$ (Reviewed 08/28/03)

LEMONGRASS CAFÉ

10417-51 Ave • 413-0088

I was driving around aimlessly for a good hour, spotting nothing but "CLOSED" signs, before pulling up to the Lemongrass Café, a tasteful little Vietnamese place. Thankfully, it was open—the better half in the passenger seat gets awful grumpy when she's real hungry. We were seated in a deuce up against the camel-coloured walls and dove right into the menus. I considered choosing something from the interesting drink menu, but it's a green tea-laced martini or a Nhuao vo sake Caesar but we didn't have the time. Need food—now. Kate and I figured, we'd pick one main dish each, while I made the executive decision to start with some spicy kimchee and a special Southwestern Vietnamese noodle soup. Our capable waiter laid down the dishes—a plate of lemon chicken and a neat-looking vegetarian option, tofu with mango and apple in a spicy red curry. Oh, and some perfectly cooked fluffy rice. The crispy pieces of chicken were topped with a sweet, lemony glaze. Nothing fancy, but it sure hit the spot. And I really loved the vegetarian dish. The tofu still had some texture to it despite swimming in the lovely, rich curry. It included a few different types of apple chunks, though I didn't find much mango in it—just a little bite every now and then. I'm assuming the

sweetness of the fruit was designed to counteract the fire of the curry and it all worked wonderfully together. (It was just fantastic spooned over the rice.) Our dessert, chocolate and pecan spring rolls, arrived atop a white, shell-shaped plate with three balls of lichee, a small dollop of whipped cream with a mint leaf and a tiny bowl of ginger coconut caramel glaze for dipping. This was a small masterpiece. I'd never seen a dessert like it and the taste was incredible—rich chocolate, melded with the pecans and paper-thin layers of the crispy spring roll, still hot. **Average Price:** \$\$ (Reviewed 08/28/03)

PADMANADI

10626-97 Street • 428-8899

What's a hungry vegetarian to do? We drove into the belly of the beast—97 Street—and sauntered into the couple-month-old Padmanadi Vegetarian Restaurant ready for a surprise. Ordering was easy: we picked the dinner for four, an incredible deal at \$48. And that wee price tag hardly prepared us for the bounty of food that came our way. Everything was perfect. Padmanadi serves a wide range of Asian styles, concentrating on Indonesian and Taiwanese-accented dishes. It's completely vegan and moreover follows the Buddhist belief of eschewing all garlic and onion. Even without these so-called culinary essentials, the flavours were alive. **Average Price:** \$\$ (Reviewed 01/16/03)

PAT 'N MIKE'S FAMILY RESTAURANT

17732-102 Ave (Westgate Business Park) • 484-7673

However long it's been since Pat 'n Mike's got started, I figure not much has changed. And that's good. As I sit at the diner-style counter in my spacious, swiveling double seat, I gaze around the noisy room and find all sorts of cool stuff. There's a rack filled with those mini-boxes of cereal and nearby is a couple of pies awaiting their call to duty. I smile when I see the circular, revolving chit-holder that the open kitchen utilizes for new orders from the "veteran" waitstaff. And Mike himself is making the rounds, keeping an eye on things during the controlled chaos of the lunch rush. I decide on the cutlet sandwich with some fries and coleslaw on the side. Almost everything that I see coming out of the kitchen has gravy on it so I join in and get a scoop for the fries. Now, I'm not going to pretend that my sandwich is one of the best things I've ever ingested—it was zapped in the deep fryer just a little too long for my liking—but for \$5.75, I didn't really expect the world. I was eager-

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ly anticipating the "special sauce" but can't help but crack another smile when I find relish and mayo on my bun. The chunky slaw is pretty good, though. The two pies available for dessert are pineapple coconut cream and an apple crumble. I choose the latter, which costs me a mere toonie—half a buck more to have it à la mode. How sweet is that? The piece of apple crumble is huge, so I'm guessing Mike doesn't make all his profit from the pie counter. **Average Price:** \$ (Reviewed 06/26/03)

PORTEGUESE CANADIAN BAKERY

5304-118 Ave • 413-4056

I knew I was onto something when the three glassy-eyed guys in front of me at the counter each ordered big Portuguese sandwiches. It sounded as if this were a routine for them. While I waited for the trio to get their order, I checked out the rest of this small bakery, a shop stocked with an assortment of homemade breads and pastries, frozen seafood, great European food items, dried herbs and a selection of impressive olive oils. There was also the deli counter, of course. Finally, it was my turn. When you order the Portuguese sandwich, you get your choice of two meats and one cheese. I chose the rosemary ham (sort of a poor man's prosciutto with rosemary caked around the outside), something called hot paio (similar to a hot capicola) and some creamy havarti cheese. When my own giant sandwich was served, I immediately took notice of how it was arranged—bread, mayo, rosemary ham, cheese, lettuce, tomato, cheese, paio, mustard. I'm positive the preparer did this on purpose. Each bite wasn't just a mish-mash of layers in which each individual item got lost in the shuffle. Instead, the ham would sometimes hit my tastebuds first and give me a stronger hint of the rosemary. Sometimes, the paio made a stronger impact. It was interesting. I preferred the soft codfish ball to the shrimp version, which was more like a fried dumpling filled with a pink mixture, though both were tasty. **Average Price:** \$ (Reviewed 04/10/03)

RED OX INN

9420-91 St • 465-5727

You either know the Red Ox or you don't—and from my understanding, if you're an Edmontonian with any genuine love for food, you're fully aware of this gem tucked away in the residential south side neighbourhood near Gallagher Park. A superior food experience is sensual by its very nature and not only was my nose happy, but my eyes were likewise when my basil crusted lamb chops were delivered. After a good white, my plate was completely void of any food. (Had I been home, I would've licked it for sure.) We sipped some more of the luxurious wine and eventually ordered something sweet—blueberry and white chocolate bread pudding with a warm crème anglaise. The food, the atmosphere, the well-timed service... all of it inspires awe in me, but what I think best sums up a place like the Red Ox Inn is the incredible attention to detail, from the finely-crafted side dishes to the lovely prints on the orange-shaded walls. **Average Price:** \$\$\$ (Reviewed 03/27/03)

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PUB 1905

10171 Saskatchewan Drive • 431-1717

There's definitely a sporting flavour in Pub 1905 (the old Ritchie Mill restaurant). Yeah, they still have the old stone walls, but it's amazing how a few strategically placed hockey jerseys can change a restaurant's theme. And the mood is further lightened by pictures of Canadian celebrities (Michael J. Fox, Leslie Nielsen, John Candy and even a print of Rush's *Moving Pictures*) strewn across the walls. They may have changed over to a pub theme, but the food has flair. Despite the changeover, there's still a special on mussels. Our big bowl, done in a tasty coconut curry cream sauce, was delicious. They were large, plump suckers and the half-price deal of just \$5 was certainly okay with the woman and me. We also tried the black tiger prawns in Cajun butter, an appetizer-sized spinach salad and something called a gourmet stuffer, a huge baked potato topped with your choice of special sauce. **Average Price:** \$ (Reviewed 11/14/02)

RICKY'S ALL DAY GRILL

10140-109 St • 421-7546

Ricky's—a western Canadian chain with a ton of outlets throughout B.C., Alberta and (I believe) Saskatchewan—serves a bevy of diner staples like liver and onions, Salisbury steak, burgers and sandwiches, but there are almost two full pages of brekkie food on the menu as well, and the cool thing is it's all available any time of the day. It's definitely a boon to the hungry diner, even if it throws a mighty big wrench into the selection process. Coffee cups are already on the tables (turned upside-down no less), and the seating consists mostly of booths. You half-expect Linda Lavin to walk up to take your order, but the Ricky's inner belly is new and clean, not beat-up and dingy like McEl's. It's like a new pair of glimmering white kicks—you need to scuff them up a bit... you know, work 'em in. They even offer shakes, so I order a chocolate one, the first time I've done so in a restaurant in years and years. The triple chorizo Benny was absolutely gargantuan, with three eggs and a mountain of home fries piled onto an extra-large red plate (heated, good for keeping the breakfast contents warm). **Average Price:** \$\$ (Reviewed 05/29/03)

SAVOY LOUNGE

10401-82 Avenue • 438-0373

The owners of Savoy Lounge make no apologies for going upscale on a street where phrases like "\$2 hi-balls" and "happy hour" are part of the vernacular (slurred, of course). I've always been a proponent of good, affordable fare;

REMEDY

8631-109 Street • 433-3096

Remedy is relaxed, authentic and off the beaten path of Whyte Ave both in geography and style. You could booze it up if you like or get a coffee if you're content to keep it civil. A couple of pool tables upstairs offer some entertainment. And of course, they always have a bunch of tasty things to snack on. The menu board has just a handful of items, like chili (vegetarian, too), sandwiches, salads and small dishes like hummus. To have a versatile little haunt like Remedy in my neighbourhood—again, away from Whyte—is a large comfort. **Average Price:** \$ (Reviewed 06/26/03)

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DISH WEEKLY

therefore, I'm all the more impressed to find that Savoy's dinner plates run around \$12 and the tapas menu ranges from \$3 to \$9. Not everyone goes for this kind of intricate cuisine, but it's a rare thing to see such a selection in a lounge, let alone at prices you can stomach. **Average Price: \$-\$**
\$\$\$ (Reviewed 08/14/03)

TERRY VAUGHN'S SPORTS LOUNGE

10136-100 St (The MacLeod) • 428-3399

If you know anything about stalwart Eskimo wide receiver Terry Vaughn, then you know he's a class act who always looks good on the football field. It's no surprise, then, that the establishment that bears his name should have the same characteristics. The space is big (okay, that's where the similarity to TV ends) and bold, with stained wood chairs/accents, a beautiful long bar, comfy leather couches and a super-high ceiling left over from the bank that was housed in the space some 20 years ago. I'm starving when we walk through the door and in time, a healthy serving (in quantity, not cholesterol) of hickory smoked chicken dip is placed in front of us. The rich portion of dip—a tasty combo of jack cheese and tender chunks of chicken topped with melted cheddar—is pretty large. Served with fresh tricoloured corn chips and salsa, it's a great starter. I know it will fill us up but I can't stop dunking the chips until every last bit of the concoction is scraped from the sides of the bowl.

We split a house salad, a standard mix of greens and veggies, but the tangy mango vinaigrette we chose sets it apart from similar items on most menus. Even though the dip has bird in it, the slow-roasted jerk chicken with rice and beans jumps off the page at me. One problem: no beans in the rice. Oh well. The chicken is incredibly tender and man, the jerk coating hits me harder than Terry's teammate Singer Mobley in the open field. This was serious heat. I really like the dish, but for a few shaky moments, I feel like I'm in a sauna. Our server, a friendly lass from Nova Scotia, recommends the cheesecake for dessert and we like the sound of a strawberry

and chocolate combo for topping. Really good stuff and nicely presented, with a few fresh mint leaves on the side. We're filled up big time by this point and ready to get outta Dodge. The tab comes and I'm fairly impressed that we've only racked up a bill of about \$60, despite what seemed like a substantial amount of food and drink. **Average price: \$-\$**
\$\$\$ (Reviewed 08/14/03)

THREE MUSKATEERS

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"The cuisine of cowardice," remarks Steve as we walk in to grab a bite. "I wonder what they'd say if I asked for freedom fries?" In fact, we order a couple of Fin du Monde beers (from Quebec) and scan through the brunch menu. I quickly fall in love with this brew, which is murky and looks like a frothy mango juice but boasts a great sweet taste—amazing considering that it's nine per cent alcohol. Exceptional flavour and a high alcohol content—that's a dangerous mix on a sunny day. After a scan of the menu, Steve makes his decision. "I don't know what it is," he says, "but I'm getting the galette Canadienne." Myself, I can't stay away from the eggs Benedict, especially when the Hollandaise sauce is homemade, unlike the handy Knorr packets I use in my own kitchen. Steve's galette is a whole-wheat crepe stuffed with smoked salmon, sour cream and capers and topped with a pink seafood puree. He takes care of the entire thing so I'm guessing it's good. My eggs Benny are sensational. I'm certainly pleased with the buttery Hollandaise, but the thick, juicy bacon makes the dish even better. The home fries could've been a little crispier, but still, it's the best Benedict I've had, which is saying a lot. I've tried many. **Average Price: \$**
\$(Reviewed 04/24/03)

ZIVELI RESTAURANT

12202 Jasper Avenue • 453-3912

Everybody was eager to partake in a serious night of indulgence and the traditional taverna surroundings in Ziveli Restaurant—grapevines, stone walls, colourful tablecloths and a refreshingly exotic waitstaff—only added to our fervour. We concluded that the mezé option—a sampling of numerous dishes for \$22.95 per person—is the way to go. Dips, pita and Greek salad make up the initial course. Then the lamb comes and all's right with the world. A Greek coffee and shot of ouzo provide a lovely finish to a damn big feast. It's amazing. **Average Price: \$-\$**
\$\$\$ (Reviewed 10/03/02)

TOKYO EXPRESS

Various locations

Edmontonian Cathy Luke digs her sushi. The only problem is that her busy lifestyle made it difficult to make regular stops at all her favourite local haunts. What she (and people like her) needed was a quick answer to that craving—so she opened up Tokyo Express. How's that

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These are a few of my favourite wings

It takes a lot of sacrificed chickens to feed the Globe's Wednesday-night diners

BY PENNY CHOLMONDELEY

It may be tasty, but it's certainly not pretty. There's no way to eat a chicken wing gracefully. Wings are meant to be devoured in an orgy of gluttony until the only evidence of the feast is a towering pile of bones and a table stuffed with bloated, sweaty diners. There's something primal about sucking and tearing the flesh off a bone, letting the hot sauce smear across your face with no shame.

In general, pub food takes a lot of ribbing. It's greasy, usually bland and the only function it's really meant to serve is the absorption of alcohol so you'll sober up and stick around for another pint. Ordinarily, the chicken wing is no different. But unless you've been to the **Globe Tap Bar and Grill**, you've never seen what chicken wing can truly become.

At World Wing night every Wednesday, you can order wings for 18 cents a pop (in multiples of 10, of course). The ringer isn't the price, but the selection. There are more than 30 flavours to choose from, ranging from the mundane to the bizarre—and each selection is matched with a country. While it's unlikely that the Philippines boasts an ancient chicken wing tradition, the Globe's spices and seasonings do make an effort to reflect each country's culinary personality—maple syrup for Canada, black bean for China and jerk for Jamaica, for instance.

For the masochists, there are also a number of hot sauces on the menu. "Spontaneous Combustion" lives up to its name by peeling the

skin off your tonsils, but even the seemingly innocuous Lemon Pepper will nip at the tongue. For the purists, there's the tried and true hot sauce, Teriyaki and Honey Garlic. Cheeky flavours like Saskatoon Berry, Honey and Brown Sugar will make you feel adventurous, but they all share the same sugary aftertaste that could be generically described as "candied chicken."

CONSERVATIVE DINERS, meanwhile, may want to steer clear of the Bushmills and Peppercorn. The Irish would likely revoke our Guinness

RESTAURANTS

privileges if they ever heard about this culinary disaster. The temptation to try a wing spiked with whiskey is overwhelming, and it can safely be assumed that many customers have been unable to resist the bait. Sadly, when they arrive at the table, they are slimy, milky and flesh-coloured—and all too reminiscent of week-old Thanksgiving gravy. Less assuming varieties such as Garlic and Onion, Tex Mex and Mexicasa are the true winners. All those are the unusual features that are helping build the Globe's reputation as the city's hot spot for wings. Get there after punching out and you can indulge in happy hour as well. The Globe lager is the perfect nondescript beer for washing the palate clean between orders.

Unfortunately, one of the drawbacks of getting your wings so cheap is that the amount of meat you actually get to ingest is minimal. Don't count on the Globe wings as an entrée. Think of them instead as a crunchy accompaniment to your beverage of choice.

The squeamish should be warned that every so often, a plate arrives at your table bearing a more disturbing side effect of the Globe's chicken wing extravaganza—mutant wings, the kind you hear about in urban legends, might stow away on your plate. More often than not, these sad, misshapen limbs grow cold on the edge of the plate or remain hidden under a dirty napkin. Thankfully, when you're working on six different orders of tasty normal wings, genetic anomalies are easy to ignore.

If you stop your chewing and crunching and think for a moment about exactly how many chickens must meet the chopping block in order to satisfy a table of four, the math becomes a tad disturbing. Fifty chicken wings equals 25 chickens. That's a lot of bird. It may not be in vain, however. The Globe is the latest in a long line of businesses to occupy an ill-fated building that has been home to numerous doomed nightclubs, including the Morgue, Senior Frog's, Temptations and Vertigo. Perhaps the Globe's weekly winged sacrifice is meant to lift the curse. ☀

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MUSIC • this week

thursday

Huge-ass American rock band **Live** will be crashing into the Joint tonight, but there are only a few tickets left at Ticketmaster. However, if you're looking for some tough broken beats to get you going on the dancefloor, check out Toronto drum 'n' bass team **Freaky Flow** (pictured) and MC **Flipside**, who will perform at New City. Local selectah **Sureshock** and MC **Flowpro** are warming up the decks. Tickets are \$15 in advance, available at Foosh, Colourblind and Underground WEM.



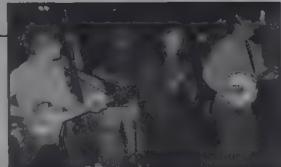
friday

Need hair metal? Then get over to the Shaw Conference Centre for a night with **Poison**, the Headpins and former Motley Crue singer **Vince Neil**—tickets at Ticketmaster. Need folk? There's **Chip Taylor** and **Carrie Rodriguez** (pictured) at the Full Moon Folk Club, touring in support of their excellent album on Train Wreck, *The Trouble With Humans*. Wanna roar? Then get over to New City for **Lickety Split**, **Pangina** and **Some Won Spit**.



saturday

George Dubya might not be everyone's favourite guy right now, but at least he's provided the name for a decent local band. **The George Bushes** (pictured) will be showing off their weapons of musical destruction at the Power Plant, with a coalition that includes Jim Bryson and the Occasionals, Jody Shenkarek and Gavin Dunn. The invasion has begun.



sunday

Truck out to the McFall Ranch at Hastings Lake 45 minutes east of Edmonton for a fundraising afternoon of food and grooves dubbed **Picnic in the Parkland**. Latin lovers **jBombal** (pictured) lead off a stellar lineup that includes Danyluk & Car, Guy Smith, Chickadivas and Jasmine Whenham. Tickets are \$50 for adults, \$10 for children 5-14, and are available at the Parkland Institute and TIX on the Square.



monday

Her Royal Majesty of Rock, **Bif Naked** (pictured), will be presiding over her loyal minions at Cowboys, singing hits from her new retrospective *Essentially Naked*. If you're a fan of the Thin White Duke, however, you won't want to miss the **David Bowie** simulcast at the SilverCity IMAX in WEM. Bowie will be performing songs from his new album *Reality*—which comes out the next day—via satellite from New York City. Advance tickets are \$15, available at SilverCity.



tuesday

Chill out at the Sidetrack Café with some acoustically-driven folk music from Edmonton and Vancouver. Headlining the show are up-and-coming favourites **Jeff Stuart** and **Brian Duffy** (pictured), with some help from Rae Spoon and newcomer Colleen. It's a measly \$4 to get in, and you also get to enjoy the Track's legendary nachos—if you're hearty enough!



wednesday

Punks will obviously head to Red's to see **No Use for a Name** hold down the cause with Bigwig and Irish Car Bomb warming things up, and Useless ID filling in for the absent None More Black. However, there's also Montreal upstarts **Self-mademan** (pictured) over at Seedy's, and **The Dudes** at New City celebrating the release of their new CD with some help from the Perms.



newswire

MTV.com reports that **The Pixies** are reuniting after a decade to embark on a world tour and may record a new album.... Classic indie band **Big Star** have included a new song, "Hot Thing," on their Rykodisc retrospective, *Big Star Story*, due in stores September 23.... **TicketMaster** has announced a new auction system to allow people to bid on tickets for high-demand concerts in order to circumvent scalpers, a move that has generated controversy in the music industry.... Guess Who guitarist and rock 'n' roll demigod **Randy Bachman** is currently recording his first jazz album, entitled *Jazzthing*, and plans to hit the blues and jazz festival circuits next year.... **Apple Computer** has announced that four months after its launch, their online music initiative, the iTunes Music Store, hit 10 million paid downloads on September 3 with a copy of Avril Lavigne's "Complicated".... **The Offspring** have decided not to piss Guns 'n' Roses frontman Axl Rose off any further, changing the title of their forthcoming album from *Chinese Democracy* to *Splinter*, which will hit stores on November 11 on Columbia.

Asked and anonymous

A Q&A session with
No Use for a Name
guitarist Dave Nassie

BY DAVE JOHNSTON

Vue Weekly: So you guys didn't play on the Warped Tour this summer. What did you do instead?

Dave Nassie: This year we got really lucky and we spent the summer relaxing. We played one gig in Berkeley [California], but other than that we just hung out and enjoyed ourselves. I learned the entire Van Halen catalogue. It was purely for shits and giggles—that's the only reason you could do anything like that. "Dance the Night Away" was pretty easy to learn.

VW: So does that mean you'll drop



some classic Van Halen on this tour?

DN: Maybe. [Bass player] Matt [Riddle] wants to play "Poundcake," so I think we should be able to squeeze that in before "Feeding the Fire."

VW: How big is this tour for you, anyway?

DN: It's a pretty extensive tour, actually. We're doing three solid weeks in Canada—we're doing a show in Portland and one in Seattle, then we're up into western Canada. We're starting from one side and working our way to the other. Then we're down into Boston to do a make-up show for one we missed while we were on tour with Sum 41, then we're flying straight over to Europe for a month. We're pretty excited about the whole thing.

VW: How was touring with Sum 41?

DN: You know what? I had a great

time, and I think they're amazing individuals. They're all really nice guys. I really can't say enough good things about them. It wasn't exactly what we expected, though. I wasn't sure how available they would be—you know, a band at that level wouldn't necessarily hang out with everybody on the tour because they'd have a pretty full agenda. But we spent a lot of time together every day and we got to know them pretty well.

They're great musicians, great players. It was a fun tour for us, for sure.

VW: Do you think that No Use for a Name could handle the kind of success that Sum 41 has right now?

DN: I think that's why we're in [music]. Someday you'd like to be accepted on a larger scale like that. I don't think we're going to sit here and wrack our brains trying to think of ways to sell ourselves short so we

can get popular quicker. But if we keep doing what we're doing, it's definitely possible. We've done seven records [for Fat Wreck Chords] and there's still great records to do, and we're still having a lot of fun doing it. That's the most important thing—when it's not fun, you won't catch any of us still doing it. But we're having a great time, and there's still a lot of great music to do.

VW: So despite the last album being called *Hard Rock Bottom*, you don't really feel that you've reached that. Where do you go from there?

DN: No, we haven't hit that, yet yet. We're playing things by ear right now [creatively]. We're looking down the barrel of a really long tour, so that's all we're thinking about now. We're going to hold up our end of the bargain [with the audience] and do really well, trying to play the

best we can. We don't want to get bored ourselves, so hopefully people will see something different at every show. As far as concept [goes], I don't think that's something we're consciously speaking about. When [singer/guitarist] Tony [Sly] sits down to write songs for the next record, I'm sure some things will start to take shape. We've got way more important things to think

about right now, though.

VW: What was the best thing about the last record for you?

DN: For me, it was the first studio record I did with the band, so that was very exciting. As a band, I think we tried to raise the musicianship up a little bit and put some stronger melodies on there. The whole thing was very exciting, but it's been some time since the record

came out [2002], so looking back, we can see a lot of things we want to improve about ourselves for the next time around. We're still touring on it and it still feels fresh and exciting. We still want to keep playing as much from it as we can. ☀

NO USE FOR A NAME

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MUSIC



music notes

BY JERED STUFFCO

Poring over their textbooks

Por Nada • With Blueroom • Stars

• Fri, Sept 12 As thousands of students get back into the daily grind of going to class, cramming for tests and drinking ridiculous amounts of coffee, the boys in local indie/space-rockers Por Nada will also be hitting the books—as well as the stage. “A couple of us have really heavy course-loads to do,” says vocalist Matt Skopyk, “but

we’re gonna try to really get things going again.”

Since breaking for summer holidays, the young quartet has been on semi-hiatus with each member “living in different corners of Alberta and Saskatchewan,” as Skopyk puts it. Despite their living arrangements, the fellas did manage to get in a few dates, ensuring that sales of their debut CD remained brisk. “They’re selling pretty good—we’re getting pretty low on them, I guess,” Skopyk says nonchalantly. “We don’t push ‘em really hard. I feel really weird pushing [our CD] on people. We try not to overdo it.”

The band has also taken the soft-sell approach to their live show, trying to turn it into one seamless piece of continuous music instead of the more traditional method of interspersing several shorter songs with a little not-so-witty banter. “I think that’s going to be the new standard format for our writing,” says Skopyk.

“It just seems more epic when you have three songs in one.”

Skopyk and his bandmates will have plenty of opportunity to flesh out their sound thanks to some new rehearsal digs at the infamous Studio City. “It’s awesome in there,” says an obviously enthusiastic Skopyk. “It’s so old and run-down, it’s got so much character. We’re down in the basement with all these metal bands around us—I think it’s going to darken up our sound a little bit. We’re gonna start putting finger-tapping and dive-bombs in our songs.”

All joking aside, the band plans to get back into the studio this fall to lay some of their new material down on tape, although Skopyk isn’t holding his breath for a record deal. “I think we’ll pretty much beg for distribution,” he laughs. “There’s been a couple labels that we’ve talked to, but we’re kind of in the frame of mind of just making contacts and developing friendships.”

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Stuart craves a family

Jeff Stuart and Brian Duffy • The Black Dog: Sat., Sept. 13 (4pm) • **Sidetrack Café:** Tue., Sept. 16 Local troubadour Jeff Stuart knows a thing or two about organization. In addition to maintaining a hectic gigging schedule over the past few months, Stuart and his musical partner Brian Duffy have been busy setting up recording sessions in Vancouver with a crop of like-minded musicians at the same studio where Stuart recorded his four-song demo earlier this year.

"We're going to head out there in the middle of October," says Stuart. "We've got a bunch of musicians lined up—we've got a drummer, a bass player, a piano player and [a] possible pedal steel player on the line. We're going to spend two or three weeks out there, so it doesn't look like we're going to be rushed."

Although much of his material to date has been dominated by a decidedly folky and stripped-down approach, Stuart's recent compositional collaborations with Duffy have allowed the pair to expand their musical palette both sonically and lyrically. "A lot of the lyrical content is still sort of my own," Stuart says, "but what's been happening is that Brian has been coming up with a lot of nice instrumental melody stuff—a lot of times two heads are better than one."

While Stuart contends that the intimacy and immediacy of a two-man acoustic show has its benefits, he and Duffy are both itching to get a full band together. "I think that the direction that we're moving in is getting a rhythm section," he says. "I think it's pretty important because it will diversify things for us. It'll give us a lot more potential for different gigs and bigger venues."

Stuart hopes that the disc, which currently bears the working title *Music From the Middle Drift*, will open a new chapter for the duo. "We're really going into this with a positive attitude, because then we'll have a product to show people. I also don't want to have a recording with a full band on it and then go out with two guys and acoustic guitars [because] people won't necessarily know what they're buying. It's good to have a little bit of consistency."

Playing with the pros

Sinclair (CD release) • Sidetrack Café: Sat., Sept. 13 Steve Spinnett isn't the type of guy to leave things to chance. As a member of local hard-rockers Sinclair, he and his bandmates are quickly gaining a reputation as some of the most professional-minded musicians in town. However, when an act of God halted the production of the band's CD, the boys in Sinclair started to get nervous. "We just got our package on Friday, actually," Spinnett explains. "We were kind of cutting it close. Apparently the blackout in Ontario played a factor."

Professional-minded? You could say that. "It's pretty unique what we do with Sinclair," he says. "Everybody in the band plays a role and we treat it completely like a business." To illustrate his last remark: In addition to writing and performing as a unit, each band member is responsible for one



Waynefest 2: Back for Seconds • Wayne, AB • Sept. 5-7 • REVUE Billed as "the big one" to small town festivalgoers, the second edition of Waynefest offered a final summer blowout that won't be forgotten by the few hundred devoted fans who made the drive to the ghost town of Wayne. Friday night gave early arrivals a chance to check out all sorts of local and imported talent during an open stage at the infamous Las Grancas Saloon, but the main action came on Saturday. Under a glorious sun, framed by the majestic badlands landscape, the little festival that could flexed its musical muscles. After a lazy afternoon of mellow tunes echoing through the hoodoos, things kicked into high gear once the pitchfork steak dinner was over. Calgary's Plain Tongued Hounds got the crowd moving with a mix of bluesy rock and honky-tonk. Later on, Jake Bugg's laid-back country-style blues set was a treat. And finally, red moon, Captain Tractor finished the night off and kept folks hopping until the wee hours. This festival offered a wicked lineup and party in a beautiful setting and hopefully it's back again next year. —Pete Doherty

major area of non-musical business. Along with banging the skins, Spinnett handles the press and takes care of PR, while his pals (or should I say "business partners"?) handle everything from ensuring the gear gets to the venue to marketing the band and booking gigs. Talk about division of labour—these guys could make Henry Ford green with envy.

According to Spinnett, the approach has paid off, with Sinclair landing opening spots with bands like the Northern Pikes and Honeymoon Suite as well as completing their first full-length—which the band self-produced, naturally. "The important thing with this band is that we feel we should be as professional offstage as we are onstage," says Spinnett. "That's the only way to be successful."

Self-explanatory

Selfmademan • Seedy's: Wed., Sept. 17 • Strathcona Legion: Fri., Sept. 19 (all ages) With the recent chart success of bands like Good Charlotte and Simple Plan, it's becoming increasingly hard to distinguish where punk ends and pop begins. But for Montreal-based punks Selfmademan, the distinction is crystal-clear.

"[A Simple Plan] bothers me," says Selfmademan singer J.P. Matte, currently gearing up for a Canada wide tour at his Montreal home. "They used to have a band back in the day that had a message to put out, and now they sing about how they're just kids. I know the singer and he's 26—he's not

a kid. He's singing to kids and he's trying to make them feel the way he did back then. I don't think he's being honest with himself. And that's fine if that's what you're into, but that's really not what I'm into."

Matte considers honesty, not commercial success, his band's paramount goal. "I'd tend to say that we are political," he says, "but we accept everyone the way they are. If you preach social justice and you hate somebody, then you're not being true to what you preach. You can learn something from everybody."

That same integrity is what led Matte recently to quit his day job with a large multinational corporation in his native Montreal. The band's new album, *The Daylight Robbery*, reflects similar sentiments. "[The title] is pretty straightforward," Matte says. "It's about people getting their day stolen away because of work—I had to quit my job to go on tour."

Despite having French as his native tongue, Matte says that being bilingual has given him the best of both worlds. Indeed, his proficiency in both official languages has allowed him to listen to Fugazi and read celebrated French authors in their original versions. "I find I write more creatively in English," he says. "It's easier to write certain things in English because French can be such a complex language; the metaphors flow differently. I've been influenced by English bands, but it's good to be broad-minded."

I doubt Good Charlotte could say the same. ♦



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GRILL Sonic Eclipse:
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MC Simeon, MC Dsnow,
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House/trance/breaks with
Charlie Mayhem, Anthony
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Jordic Foundations: DJ
Dennis Zaz and Rackman
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SUM
LIVE MUSIC

ARDEN Ron Sexsmith,
Mad Violet

BLUES ON WHYTE
Shelley Jones and Rbs; no
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CAPITAL HILL PUB
Open stage with
Rockstreet Rob and Co.

MC FALL RANCH Picnic in
the Parkland: 1800m, Le
Jazz, Danyluk and Car,
Guy Smith, Chickadivas,
Samme Whetman; hosted
by Clark; 1-5:30pm;

MON
LIVE MUSIC

BLUES ON WHYTE

\$50 (adult)/\$10 (child 5-
14) incl. lunch; tickets
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Institute, TIX on the
Square

O'BRYNE'S Joe Bird's Irie
jam; 9:30pm

ATRIKE UNITED
CHURCH Jazz and
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SIDETRACK CAFE Superhouse;
DJ Dudeman (pop/rock); \$6

DJS

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O'BRYNE'S Celtic night
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and friends

SHERLOCK HOLMES
(DOWNTOWN) Dave
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SHERLOCK HOLMES
(WEM) Mike Zaine

SIDETRACK CAFE Jeff
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FOUR ROOMS RESTAU-

Russell Jackson; no cover
L.B.'S PUB Open stage
with Randy Martin; 9pm-
2am

SHERLOCK HOLMES
(WEM) Mike Zaine

SIDETRACK CAFE Open
Stage with Ben Spencer;
no cover

DJS

THE ARMORY
Upstairs: house with
Junior Brown

BACKROOM VODKA
BAR Local Motive: trance,
house, break with Dj Waterboy,
guests

BLACK DOG FREE-
HOUSE Indie rock with
Penny and the Jets

NEW CITY LIKwid
LOUNGE New Music
Industry Night: mixed

TUE
LIVE MUSIC

BLUES ON WHYTE

Russell Jackson; no cover

BACKROOM VODKA
Bar Open stage and jam
hosted by Randy

THE ROOST Open stage with
DJ Rhonda; \$1 (member)/\$4
(non-member)

SEEDY'S Electro-trash
electro/punk funk with DJ

Miss Mannered

URBAN LOUNGE Open
with DJ Gilligan

WED
LIVE MUSIC

BLUES ON WHYTE

Russell Jackson; no cover

BACKROOM VODKA
Bar Open stage and jam
hosted by Randy

THE ROOST Open stage with
DJ Smallman, Chris Burant
and Mark Kozov; 9pm-1am

DRUD Open stage with
Chris Wynters

O'BRYNE'S Celtic night
with Shannon Johnson
and friends

SHERLOCK HOLMES
(DOWNTOWN) Dave
Hebert

SHERLOCK HOLMES
(WEM) Mike Zaine

SIDETRACK CAFE Jeff
Stuart and Brian Duffy
with Raw Spoon and
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MUSIC



Duo gets a do-over

Well-connected
Madviolet goes
back for seconds

BY JERED STUFFCO

Sometimes a mishap can turn out to be a blessing in disguise. Just ask Toronto-based popsters Madviolet. After their recordings from a recent session in London were accidentally erased, the duo of Brenley MacEachern and Lisa MacIsaac were forced to start over from scratch. The result? A crash course in fate.

"We went over [to London] for eight days to do some preproduction," MacIsaac explains over the phone from her home in Toronto, "and we banged out about five tracks—everything was pretty much done except for the vocals. We came back here and found out a few days later that it had all been erased. It ended up being a blessing, because we went back for six weeks and it enabled us to work with some incredible players—and have Brian Eno stop in for supper. It was so inspiring."

Rubbing shoulders with some of the industry's best and brightest has become almost commonplace for the pair. Indeed, a conversation with MacEachern and MacIsaac drops more famous names than an episode of *Entertainment Tonight*. It also helps that legendary Brit John Reynolds helmed the studio sessions for the pair's new self-titled disc. "John is a drummer—he's drummed with Sinéad [O'Connor] and the Indigo Girls and a number of different artists; he's done some tracks with Björk and Jah Wobble—so he did all the live drums and the programming," MacEachern says. "[Studio musicians] Matthew [Seligman], Clare [Kenny], Kieran [Kiley] and John Klein are all really good friends, because they used to be Sinéad's band. They did a record with the Indigo Girls providing all the instruments, apart from the guitars, and they did the same for us."

SINCE FORMING from the ashes of ambient rockers Zoobliss, the two Macs have been busy. In the last year

they've toured Europe, including an appearance at the famed Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland, played all over North America and shared bills with CanCon mainstays like Chantal Kreviazuk, Jesse Cook and Ron Sexsmith. They also scored the backing of a U.S.-based manager in Russell Carter, who handles such acts as Matthew Sweet and the Indigo Girls.

"Brenley was reading [Toronto alt-weekly] *Now* and noticed that the

Indigo Girls were coming to Toronto to play at the Molson Amphitheatre

PREVIEW POP

and she thought that it would be a good bill to get an opening slot," explains MacIsaac, whose brother Ashley has also had his share of "good bills" over the years. "The next day she phoned John [Reynolds] and asked him if he would send Russell a package, because if it came from him, then it would get opened. A week later we got a long e-mail saying, 'Sorry, all the dates have been booked up but I've fallen in love with your music and I'd like to talk about management.' A couple days later he flew up, and he's been working with us ever since."

DESPITE THE BACKING of a high-profile manager and a busy tour schedule, the duo say they're in no rush to sign with a major label. According to MacEachern, in today's music industry even a hit record doesn't guarantee a long-term career. "We did a tour with two of Russell's other artists in October—Josh Joplin and Peter Stewart, who had a huge hit with his old band Dogs Eye View," he says. "These are guys that have had hits, they've toured extensively and now they're starting all over again—it's a tough thing right now for any singer-songwriter. It's difficult to maintain a career on a major label because they're really into developing careers. They're into 'Let's get one big hit and move on.'

"So," MacIsaac continues, "I think that smaller indie labels, especially in North America, are really starting to take off, and more and more artists are starting to sign to them." ♦

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Sean Austin-Joynor

street vision

BY SEAN AUSTIN-JOYNOR

Blazing indifference

Blackalicious • With the Oddities and Darkson Tribe • Red's • Sat., Sept 6 • reVUE I've got a beef with Alberta. Wait—for the love of God, let me rephrase that. I've got a *problem* with Edmonton. We're a city with a population of 666,104—not including the metropolitan area, mind you—45,000 of whom I'm sure will claim to be the city's greatest rapper. You can find a freestyle battle or a local talent showcase any given week in this city, and one thing remains constant in all of them—the performers' total lack of stage presence. As entertaining as it can be to watch MC fill-in-the-Blank pace back and forth across the stage, babbling about guns he doesn't own, "hos" he doesn't pimp and money he has to borrow from his mom, it would be so much more interesting to watch a headliner who doesn't feel the need to invite a dozen friends, family members and casual acquaintances onstage to share the spotlight.

Edmonton wasn't always like this. There was a time—before Urban Metropolis refused to "exploit" the local scene, before Arlo Maverick and Reece started verbally bitch-slapping each other on Internet message

boards and before everyone who walked with a backpack considered themselves an MC—when showmanship actually mattered. These performers didn't stumble upon their high stage energy by accident. They studied their cohorts and rehearsed their routines as if performing were their full-time job, and for many, that's exactly what it became.

That's why it disappoints me to no end when a great opportunity for local talent to better itself rolls through town and only a small number of our city's entertainers show up. Blackalicious's run through Red's last Saturday was more than just another hip-hop concert—it was a master class in showmanship. With only two MCs, two backup singers and a DJ on stage, the group relied on their experience to deliver a performance comparable to recent concerts in these parts by Public Enemy and De La Soul.

Much of the night was devoted to songs from the group's recent *Blazing Arrow* album, and only a brief stretch of time was dedicated to brand-new material. Still, the seamless transitions between favourites like "Sky Is Falling," "Paragraph President" and "First in Flight" not only had the crowd screaming for the entire two-hour performance, but left them dazed and amazed for days afterwards as well. It wasn't uncommon to hear the phrase "best show ever" uttered by the hundreds of university students filling out of the venue.

And so the question remains—where were the local performers? Granted, there were a few to be found congregating by the bar or on the dancefloor, and if they paid attention I'm sure they picked up a few tips. But for the most part, much of our home-grown talent truly missed out.

Maybe it's the fact that Blackalicious doesn't cater to the regular urban crowd. Instead of recording filler material precariously supported by one crossover hit, their songs are consistently relevant. Or maybe it's just that people are weary of seeing concerts put on by local promoters fall victim to a staggering number of cancellations. I do find it funny, though, that no one had a problem

watching the glory of wackness when Foxy Brown stumbled into Rum Jungle a little while ago.

I guess for some aspiring musicians, the only homework they feel they have to do is watch Bone Crusher videos on MuchVibe and study the bonus features on the *8 Mile* DVD. Just don't be surprised when they wake up one day and the conscious faction of the local scene has passed them by. ☀



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BY JENNY FENIAK

What a little Moonlight can do

Sixth Annual Moonlight Jam •
Featuring Terry Morrison, John Gorham, Beth Schuld, Colleen Brown, The Fuzz Band, Maurice Jones, Marshall Lawrence, Global Voices, Funkafeelya and Della the Belly Dancer • **Sidetrack Café •**
Thu, Sept 11 They say knowledge is power, but awareness ought to figure somewhere in that equation too. In

any case, the efforts of organizations like the Global Visions Film Society have made learning about the ways of our world a little bit easier—and definitely more enjoyable.

Global Visions arranges for screenings of creative, entertaining socially conscious documentaries from around the world as a way of raising public awareness about everything from poverty to political inequity. It started off as an offshoot of the Centre for International Alternatives until the group fell apart six years ago, leaving festival organizers to face the tough decision of whether they could go on alone.

In the end, they refused to allow the event to disintegrate, and a scheme was devised by Edmonton acoustic guru Bill Bourne and Shelaine Sparrow to unearth the necessary funds. Sparrow had decided to turn to the musical community for help in her monetary quandary. She met up with Bourne, already a well-respected local musician, through connections she had at the

Sidetrack Café, and he was instrumental in pulling together the talent and the audience for an eclectic, fundraising mix of folk and rock music, which they dubbed the Moonlight Jam. Before long, the Jam was the Global Visions Society's primary source of funding.

As the years went on, Sparrow found additional funding for the festival through the government and the private sector, but the event remains an important cog in the machine. "It's just trying to keep a varied and balanced situation so you don't get into that position of when federal funding goes down, you're without," explains Sparrow, who has resigned her position as festival director but still takes an active role in keeping the Moonlight Jam alive. "I think any organization has to do that. So, definitely we want to keep the Moonlight Jam going and have it be an important source of income. But even more, it's that everybody comes out and has a good time and can refocus at this time in September for a festi-



Terry Morrison

val that's coming up in November."

Veteran songstress and Edmonton native Terry Morrison has been a part of the Jam every year save one, and she plans to join the gang onstage again this year. "That kind of thing, it's always fun," she says. "It's just as much entertainment for you and [the organizers] are pretty good—they give you perks. Like, if you're a musician, you get passes to the festival itself, which is really nice. It's nice to have that kind of exchange—to me, it's pretty equal and it's a great festival."

Morrison's own musical career has spanned nearly 30 years and has included dalliances with jazz, R&B and dance bands. Since moving back to Edmonton from the west coast 12 years ago, Morrison has been concen-

trating on her own heartfelt songwriting style, banking her more frivolous indulgences to spend later in life. "Probably my biggest love affair was with jazz," she says, "and I just sort of left that because I almost put as much energy into that as I do into my own music and I think if I'm doing one, sort of neglect the other. So I just decided I would save it for when I was a gracious lady."

Morrison is currently putting the final touches on her third solo recording since coming back to Edmonton. "In jazz it seems the older musicians are still revered," she says, "[whereas] in popular music, they tend to go by the wayside even though they've probably got more licks under their belts—it's just the way our culture sells."



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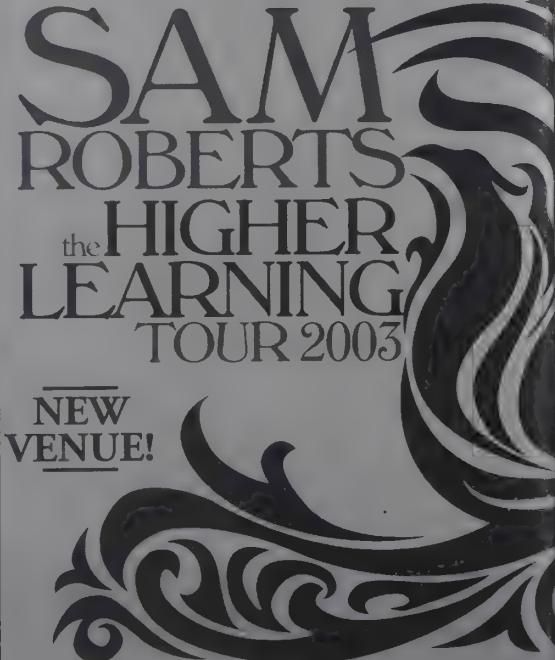
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bpm

BY DAVID STONE

Loyal listeners

Okay, so "raves" are dead. No one listens to techno. House music isn't real music. Yada yada yada. Still, the sound of the global underground marches on. People are still producing amazing music, people are still playing it, people are still buying it. And people are still listening, when they're given the opportunity.

It's disheartening now to talk with promoters who believe they can put on quality events that would appeal to a wide variety of tastes, but the dual attack of the economy and negative perceptions fueled by an clueless media has made it next to impossible to get anything accomplished. Venue costs are skyrocketing, and bureaucracy continues to be all the more bewildering and obstructive. If you want to know why a local promoter has to charge over \$60 for a party, don't assume it's all about greed—that might be the only way they can (barely) cover the cost of opening the doors.

Still, it's refreshing to know that a few local mainstream clubs are willing to step forward and let a few entrepreneurial spirits get a night going. Since opening its doors this past summer, **The Standard** has devoted their Thursday nights to house music. With the help of Connected Entertainment, the club has seen the likes of Mark Farina, Satoshi Tomiie and Marques Wyatt control the dancefloor, and the arrival of Naked Music impresario **Miguel Migs** on September 25 signals the club's commitment to staying the course. Of course, **Spin Thursdays** would be nowhere without the efforts of the residents, Tripswitch, Nestor Delano and Johnny D'Erico, who hold down the fort every week with taste and skill. The Standard is also opening up their doors on Sunday, September 28 for a night of dancefloor-friendly drum 'n' bass with **Aphrodite**, presented by Subterranean Sound and Event Horizon.

Over the past summer, **Cowboys** opened their patio on Thursdays to a small roster of local DJs, who spun a wide array of house beats for willing ears. Every week, players like Derkin, Josh Melton and Anthony Donohue brought down the gear, lugged their

record crates down, and made people wonder why the music was being kept out on the patio. The money might not have been a lot, but that wasn't the point—it was a chance to play the kind of music they loved for an audience.

The Manhattan Club might have taken some heat for the scuttled Mark Oliver gig a month or so back, but the downtown establishment has given more than a few up-and-coming jocks a chance with their Freestyle Thursdays. Few places would allow novice DJs an opportunity to walk into their booth and work on a professional system, but credit has to go to the place for giving a few would-be Diggers the opportunity and a potential break into the local DJ hierarchy.



Then there's the Power Plant—specifically **Dewey's Lounge**—which has been the home of Phoenix Production's Higher Education. Last year, the night was hidden away on Thursdays, but it still managed to attract a small, loyal following, and apparently it was enough to try it out again. Like Freestyle Thursdays at Manhattan, Higher Education offered some exposure and experience to newbies as well as a casual gig for a few of Edmonton's more established names. This year, residents Abacus and Trapz have inherited Friday nights, and already the night is on its way to being a success—definitely a night to watch for in the coming months.

While house heads have made Halo their home for Saturday nights, there have been few places to enjoy the darker, harder end of the beat spectrum. But Galatea and friends have constructed a hearty enclave across the street from Lister Hall near the U of A campus. Every Saturday at the **Windsor Pub and Grill**, a group of regular locals get together and mash up beats from techno to breaks. It's a casual jeans-and-hoodie atmosphere, but the beats are truly underground.

It's also a longstanding tradition for underground rock clubs to acknowl-

edge electronic culture as well, and both **New City** and **Seedy's** have devoted several nights on their weekly calendar to the bleeps and thuds of drum machines and keyboards. New City has several genre-blurring nights, beginning with Solid Thursdays. Held down by talented residents LP, Juicy and Jameel, the weekly encompasses breaks, house and techno, and tonight (Thursday), they welcome drum 'n'

bass into the fold with guests **Freaky Flow** and **MC Flipside** alongside locals Sureshock and MC Flowpro. Then there's the Sunday night double hit of the electromash Progress night in the main room, and the groovy Atmosphere up in the lounge. Over at Seedy's, DJ Miss Mannered has mixed together punk, funk and electro in a bewitching brew called Trash Tuesdays.

I could go on and talk about the

electropunk Thursdays at the Black Dog, or the chilled-out funk there on Sunday nights. Or maybe even the deep house at the Savoy, or the crazy mash-ups on Sundays at the Back Room. But I only have so much space. That should tell you something. ☺

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MUSIC



classical notes

BY ALLISON KYDD

Here's looking at you, kids

With apologies to Alexandra Munn, piano teacher and leader of voice and piano collaborative seminars at Grant MacEwan's Alberta College Conservatory of Music, I'm going to use the informal term—"kids," not "children." But whatever you prefer to call them, kids were taken seriously at the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra's Symphony Under the Sky last Labour Day weekend. Not only were they treated to a Teddy Bear Picnic and *World in a Flapp* with Major Conrad Flapp—an energetic, crowd-involving show which lacked only Canadian content—but they had free admission to all events, provided they could sit on the grass.

The presence of the RhythMatix dance troupe was also a nod to youth. In his program notes, ESO composer-in-residence Allan Gilliland explained that he developed *A Wild Symphonic Ride* for the Symphony for Kids series. It was a case of adapting existing choreography to include the orchestra—a brilliant idea, except that it didn't quite work. Not only

was the act too long, but the orchestra was sidelined except when the trumpet soloist appeared and the brass section began playing their balloons. However, judging by the applause, Saturday's sell-out crowd appreciated the enthusiasm and technical skill of the dancers.

Seventeen-year-old Erin Craig also had the audience on their feet. Every year, Gilliland works with young composers within the school system—the students write the music and Gilliland helps them orchestrate it for this open-air ESO performance. According to Gilliland, Craig didn't need much help. Entitled "Metro" because it suggests the bustle of the Montreal subway, her work combines a beautiful melody with a number of different moods and effects.

The students participating in master classes also tended to be young people, and the "masters" took this fact very much into account. John Lowry, the assistant concertmaster for the Calgary Philharmonic, set the tone. He not only congratulated the students but also commented that he had never seen so many people at a master class.

Guest cellist Patrick Jee encouraged students to breathe as if singing. "In practice room, don't be afraid of making an unpleasant sound," he said. "The challenge is to make every note beautiful and understand why." When he asked his students to sing the first few phrases of their performance pieces, they suppressed their giggles and did it. We sometimes assume appreciation of the finer things comes with maturity; but there are many young musicians with highly developed

musical insights and analytical abilities.

Watching these young performers in action, I was reminded of a debate about the ability of kids to enjoy opera and Alberta Opera's transition to musical theatre. "There are many children's operas," my partner reminded me. "Think of the English repertoire." No doubt Opera NUOVA could also enlighten me, for every year it comes up with something new to complement *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. What can I say? I grew up in the country and once taught junior high, so the idea of combining the back-of-the-room troublemakers with opera brings tears to my eyes. Perhaps English public schools should introduce such a diet in infancy. On the other hand, it's vital that we don't underestimate youth by assuming they only respond to "accessible" material.

University of Alberta music professors Tanya Prochazka and Martin Riesley wouldn't make such a mistake, as many of their students have become their colleagues and partners in performance. This was apparent at September 5's Music at Convocation Hall concert. Violinist Alycia Au, violinist and violist Aaron Au and pianist Patricia Tao are well on their way to establishing their own careers.

Then there's the Edmonton Saxophone Quartet. Capitalizing on the concert high created by their concert at Muttart Hall on September 6, they held auditions for anyone interested in playing in the Conservatory's Saxophone Quartet. For more information call the Conservatory of Music office at (780) 423-6230. ☐

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Martyrs proves when it comes to country, Luther's the Wright man for the job

BY JAMES ELFORD

What's an alt-country band to do when they get stuck in New York City during the biggest blackout in recent memory? Kick up their heels, down as many beers as they can afford and jam their asses off, of course.

At least, that's what Luther Wright and the Wrongs did when visiting New York on their current tour to promote their new album, *Guitar Pickin' Martyrs*. "We sort of wandered back to Chris Brown's to have a monster superstar jam in his backyard with all the bands and buddies of theirs," explains the lanky Wright. "Luckily the power came on in the morning because we spent every available piece of currency on beer. Typical musicians, you know—living in the moment."

And the moment is good for Wright and the Wrongs. The success of their bluegrass take on Pink Floyd's *The Wall* (called *Rebuild the Wall*) opened a lot of, er, doors for them. "It's just getting that first gig," says

Wright, "and we felt confident if we could just get five people watching they'd know that there's something more. But all that great press from *Rebuild* helped and we did interviews with everyone—*New York Times*, *L.A. Times*, *Chicago Tribune*. And [playing a lot of original material on tour] worked for us because when we came back people knew we were a real band with real songs and stuff."

While proud of *Rebuild the Wall*, the Wrongs are concentrating on building a live audience rather than milking their more popular cover for

PREVIEW COUNTRY

all it's worth. "*Rebuild the Wall* was a kooky thing that came up," Luther says, "but we didn't approach it with the hope of exploiting it to get our careers going or get into America—if we were that clever it would be great."

Their original material has plenty of old-time country spirit to carry them along—songs full of tears, beers and stories that don't refer to beating up terrorists. Wright rips his heart out and throws this bloody, still-warm, pulsating mass of emotions into his music, while the Wrongs crush every stereotype of bearded rednecks in jug bands, whether they're playing twangy toe-tappers or quiet, remorseful, drunken ballads. Underlying it all is a

sense of humour that is appropriately sly and witty.

THE NEW ALBUM WAS initially intended to be named *Broken Fuckin' Heart* after the leadoff track, but despite the new, more polite title, the song still serves as the thematic fulcrum upon which the rest of the tunes are precariously balanced. Wright says *Guitar Pickin' Martyrs* is the final installment in a loose trilogy of discs about hurtin' and heartbreak—and he chose as his theme this time around the pain of romance and the effort to takes to heal it. "This last one I just wanted to hit it out of the ballpark with heartbreak and getting through it, which is a common theme for anybody in any language and at any time in history," Wright says. "I just sort of try and use the country music genre for something that I was always attracted to it for—to sort of make an archetypal record, something that stands the test of time."

The album's subject matter may be sorrowful, but Wright feels country music can deal with emotions that would seem sloppily sentimental in other idioms. "In country music," he says, "you got that honesty where you can blend it with humour without offending anyone. You can laugh at it. It's like the 12 steps in an AA meeting—there's nothing really funny about it but

you can all laugh since we're all human. It's tragic and beautiful and funny. That's the thrust of the record—here's something that can help you out. I always think of [country] as the kind of music you write around the kitchen table and there's stories that you tell each other. It's not just doinkity-doin, but the feel of stories being told."

Of course, it took a while for a budding punk musician like the young Luther Wright to realize he was a country musician at heart. "Our drummer Mauro [Seppe] was in a garage band with me and my brother," he recalls, "and he said, 'These are country tunes you're writing and we could slow down and play it like this.' Later on I started to feel confident enough to play them and started to feel comfortable in my skills to play country music with its bare-bones sound. I mean, there's no hiding mistakes—it's so precise."

This precision doesn't translate

to every aspect of Wright's shows: indeed, the Wrongs usually make up their setlists on the spot depending on the crowd. "It's like watching a car accident in slow motion," Wright jokes, "where the car comes back together in the end."

Maybe people just like watching car accidents, but Wright's can tell many a tale of people approaching him after his shows to tell him how they don't like country music, but somehow found themselves lovin' the Wrongs. Or maybe it's simply because the Wrongs concentrate on the basics: making sure the audience has a good time. "It's an old-time show," Wright says. "There's that element of 'come out and forget your troubles for three hours.' That's what I do when I go and see bands—forget about laundry and taxes. Everything else around it is fluff." ●

LUTHER WRIGHT AND THE WRONGS
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NEW SOUNDS

SWELL

WHENEVER YOU'RE READY
(BEGGARS BANQUET)

I've loved Swell since 1993 and their magnum opus 41, which first drew me into their narcotic swirl of a sound—part Lou Reed, part dream and part loneliness. If you took all of the commercialism and rock awareness away from the Dandy Warhols (whom I also love) you'd get Swell.

As always, Swell's acoustic guitar-driven sound, with its light layers of synths, timely drumming and the ubiquitous voice of main man David Freib (who wrote a handwritten reply to the only fan letter I've ever sent to a band) never overwhelms the listener, but sort of sinks into your brain as if through osmosis. But who wants to be overwhelming when you can be low-key, mysterious, intriguing and somewhat aloof, attracting like-minded types who aren't suckered in by flash and hype?

The truth is, in a music world full of calculated shit, Swell makes art. They don't care if you buy their records, and you know what? Neither do I. In fact, it makes me feel cool knowing that practically the only people who know about Swell are me and Swell. Or so it seems. So, don't check out this, their seventh album. Besides, they're so far past "indeed rock," you probably won't get it anyway. ★★★★ —T.C. SHAW

OH SUSANNA

OH SUSANNA
(STELLA RECORDS/NETTWERK)

It's unusual when an artist's third release is the one with the eponymous title. Then again, it's also odd when an artist assigns her band an unlikely handle like Oh Susanna—it may roll off the tongue better than "Suzie Ungerleider," but it sounds more like the name of one person, not a group.

Regardless, the cast of Oh Susanna has never been stronger and Ungerleider's voice has never been finer. On *Oh Susanna*, her sultry vocals rocket around the fences of the country-folk corral, galloping delicately but purposefully from Emmylou Harris to Neko Case to something totally unique, eliciting deep emotions with every whisper-soft touch down here on earth.

Backed by the likes of Blue Rodeo bass player Bazil Donovan and both Travis Good of the Sadies and Veal's Luke Doucet on guitars, Ungerleider sings of "a beauty so profound that only God could know." She also covers Bob Dylan's "I'll Keep It With Mine" and plays a few rootsy, rollicking toe-tappers. But mostly, as on her 1999 full-length debut



Johnstown, it's the moody darkness of her voice and stories that shines through. Oh Susanna has a month of dates booked opening for Blue Rodeo in the U.S., but it's Ungerleider who should be front and centre these days. ★★★★ —DAN RUBINSTEIN

WEEN

QUEBEC
(SANCTUARY/EMI)

Like a craving for another hit from the Scotchgard bong, Ween has sneaked back into our lives whether you wanted them to or not. After years of being equally praised and derided, these masters of experimental sound have returned with their eighth album after a three-year hiatus marked by personal and professional struggles—including their departure from their longtime label, Elektra. Luckily, Quebec is as eclectic, quirky and defiantly uncommercial as their previous work.

For the most part, the album features more laid-back psychedelic melodies and ambient noise than some of their more hook-filled and high-energy albums. At the same time, their penchant for juvenile and irreverent lyrics has been toned down, giving the album a slightly darker tone than you'd expect from the band that brought us the aggravatingly infectious "Push th' Little Daisies." This isn't to say that their weird little world of sound hasn't been washed clean of humour—"Hey There Fancy Pants" is still a giggle—but Quebec is definitely more subdued.

From the mad cacophony that is "The Fucked Jam" to the aching slowness of "Alcan Road" or the odd, gurgled vocal on the otherwise soothing soundscape that is "Zoloft," Ween draws upon a diversity of sound with this disc. Their influences seem to include everyone from Genesis to Motorhead, whose imprint is all over the headjerking opener "It's Gonna Be a Long Night," complete with Lemmy-style shouting and lyrics like "You bring the razor blade/I'll bring the sheath."

The result is an addictive and disturbing collection of songs, a refreshing follow-up to the go-nowhere *White Pepper* album. ★★★★ —JAMES ELFORD

CLAMOUR PUSS
WIRE AND WOOD
(NORTHERN BLUES)

Glamour Puss aren't from the Deep South, but you'd be hard-pressed to believe it. Their swingin' modern blues are as sophisticated as anyone else working the same circuit in



North America.

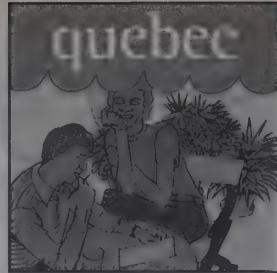
What makes it all work for this New Brunswick five-piece is their ability to balance technical virtuosity and self-taught, down home playin'—most of the time, you get one or the other and never the twain shall meet. But blues aren't the only thing on the Pusses' musical menu. As luck would have it, they're also an extremely adept zydeco band—even to the extent of singing in French. Above all, Glamour Puss possesses a quality that more blues acts could use: a sense of spontaneity which translates into fresh-sounding music that dares you not to tap your toes. Salut! ★★★★ —T.C. SHAW

VARIOUS ARTISTS

VERVE REMIXED 2
(VERVE)

Maybe it's too obvious an idea. DJs and hip-hop artists have been using samples from old jazz recordings for so long that the idea of the legendary Verve jazz label inviting an all-star team of electronic musicians and producers to prepare remixes of classic tracks from their enormous back catalogue must have seemed like a no-brainer. But a lack of brains isn't the problem here. What's wrong with *Verve Remixed 2* (a sequel to the successful 2002 original) is that the half-heartedness that marks the contributions of so many of the artists involved with this project; most of the tracks here have all the passion of a dutifully completed homework assignment. (Or not so dutifully, as is the case with Dan the Automator's lazy remix of Willie Bobo's "Fried Neck Bones and Some Home Fries.")

The album does its greatest disservice to the singers of the original tracks; Miguel Migs's remix of "Slap That Bass" is particularly criminal in the way it smooths out Ella Fitzgerald's peppy, syncopated rhythms and slows down her tempo, as if to make her sound as much like a generic modern R&B singer as possible. And it was probably an impossible idea from the start for DJ Spinna to attempt to make the idiosyncratic, loosey-goosey phrasing of Betty Carter's "Naima's Love Song" to conform to the rigid structures of a dance track. The Funky Lowlives do an okay job with Dizzy Gillespie's "Manteca" and Fila Brazillia has a lot of campy fun with Cal Tjader's "Soul Sauce," but as you can hear if you listen to the accompanying *Verve Unmixed* bonus disc, nothing these 21st-century knob-twiddlers do comes close to topping the joy or the musical skill of the originals. ★★★ —PAUL MATYCHUK



THE DAY AFTER
ONLY THE ILLEST SURVIVE
(FIRSTBORN ENT.)

I've been impressed with Michie Mee ever since I first heard Raggadeath. Despite their furious riffing, pound for pound, the diminutive Mee more than matched the group's energy. After her last gig—hosting CBC's teen quiz show *Smart Ask*—it seemed as if the queen of CanRap had abdicated her crown.

The Day After bears more than a passing resemblance to Raggadeath, but they possess more versatility, pulling off a wider range of moods and generally covering more ground, as in the jangly, Porno for Pyros-esque "Generation Gap." That track is the flipside to heavy metal workouts like "Break the Rules," a moshpit firestarter that Michie—of course—effortlessly keeps up with. She's kept her skills sharp, and if she hasn't burnt her bridges at MotherCorp, you wouldn't know it from listening to *Only the Illest Survive*. Go, Michie, go! ★★★★ —T.C. SHAW

THE WANNADIES
BEFORE AND AFTER
(TRUE NORTH)

For most North American music fans, the only association the Wannadies' name brings to mind is "You and Me Song," which became a bit of an underground cult fave in '96 thanks to its spot on the *Romeo + Juliet* soundtrack.

But over in their native Sweden, the Wannadies are regarded as heroes, mixing bubbling guitar lines with candy-coated pop music to create a sound that owes more than a little to the influence of Phil Spector. With their latest effort, the band has added a few lumps of sugar to their already so-sweet pop sounds. Canned drumbeats litter the first two tracks, "Little by Little" and "Nothing Wrong," making them come off like songs you'd more likely hear from distant Scandinavian pop cousins like Roxette. The bass-driven "Uri Geller" and the dreamy guitar of "Skin" will allay any worries that this record is a little too geared towards here-today-gone-tomorrow Wal-Mart pop, but the album still leaves you with the same feeling you get after you eat Chinese at a suburban mall—tastes pretty good, but do I still feel hungry? ★★★ —STEVEN SANDOR

THE NEW AMSTERDAMS
WORSE FOR THE WEAR
(VAGRANT/TVT)

Fans of '80s New Wave might remember Squeeze, who may have inadvertently created emo-core without really trying. The '80s also brought us Mark Eitzel and the American Music Club, who combined shoegazing lyrics with



subtle, sometimes haunting music. The New Amsterdams could be considered a hybrid group who incorporate elements from all those bands. Besides being "sensitive guys," the New Dams are anything but a rock 'n' roll band; instead, *Worse for the Wear* is a series of unassuming college/indie/pop soundscapes which will most definitely not rock the house, but just might help you get to second base with that mousy poetry major who never says anything—and turns you on all the more for it. ★★★ —T.C. SHAW

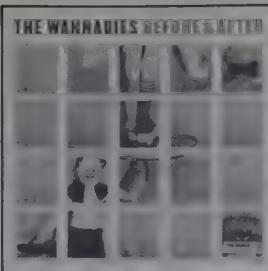
BLACK REBEL MOTORCYCLE CLUB TAKE THEM ON, ON YOUR OWN (VIRGIN/EMI)

Two years ago, I was lucky enough to get to Lee's Palace in Toronto to see BRMC play before a packed house. It was a tough to get past the door—even Robin Black couldn't get in—but the show was something to behold. The stage was smoked out, the lights were minimal and the band conjured up memories of the Jesus and the Mary Chain, except they didn't play with their backs to the audience. They asked to the question, "What ever happened to my rock 'n' roll," and the answer was there. It was a throwback to rebel posing, attitude dressed up in leather and feedback. It was theatrical and pretentious—and a great show because of it.

What's appealing about BRMC's sophomore album is how little things have changed. *Take Them On, On Your Own* is all about swagger and psychedelia hiding in the shadows. It's a much stronger record than their debut, if only because the songs are tighter. The album opener, "Stop," a juicy bit of groove nailed around a propulsive hook, sets the stage while numbers like "Six Barrel Shotgun" and the splendid "Generation" jack up the blues with a bit of speed. Yes, it still sounds like the Jesus and March Chain, Love and Rockets, My Bloody Valentine and countless other low-slung pop bands that sound-tracked many a night out at the Bronx, but it's nice to know somebody is still making unashamed, moody, buzzed-out pop like they used to. ★★★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON

BALZAC BEYOND THE DARKNESS (MISFITS/RYKO)

Ostensibly the companion volume to the Misfits' recently released *Project 1950*, Balzac is Japan's answer to the Misfits, proving once again the old adage that when America sneezes, Japan catches a cold. Still, when the Japanese emulate American culture, the result is always so, well, Japanese. When a Tokyo punk walks down the crowded street, for instance, he may



wear a leather jacket, but the effect is slightly, surreally off somehow—the pins will be too carefully positioned or the coat will be perfectly pressed.

As for Balzac, the Nipponese four-piece has gone to the length of having their own leather "Misfits" skeleton gear made to order and, except for the odd synth part or bit of drum programming, they borrow the Misfits' manic version of pop/rock, kick it up a couple and proceed to... well, rewrite the same basic tune again and again and again. The songs are kinda catchy at first, but their repetitive nature grows ever more tiresome the longer you listen. And the vocals, which might be in Japanese—how should I know?—contain more "oh-whoah"s than a Swedish pom festival.

In the end, these eratz Misfits are nearly as exciting as a weekend in the town of Balzac. Gimme Most Extreme Elimination Challenge over this any day of the week. ★★★ —T.C. SHAW

THE DECEMBERISTS HER MAJESTY THE DECEMBERISTS (KILL ROCK STARS)

If you asked me to compile a list of all the contemporary writers who seemed to be the likeliest prospects to be commemorated in song by an indie rock band, I probably would have placed novelist Myla Goldberg, with great sadness, near the bottom. But one of the sweetest tracks on *Her Majesty the Decemberists*, the new disc by the Decemberists is "Song for Myla Goldberg," which pays tribute both to her wonderful book *Bee Season* ("Sew wings to your pigeon toes/Put paper to pen and spell out Eliza") and to the spindly-legged pose she strikes in her jacket photo ("Seraphim in seaweed swim where stick-limbed Myla lies").

Lead singer and songwriter Colin Meloy draws upon all sorts of similarly odd sources of inspiration throughout this disc: "Billy Liar" is a tribute to the 1963 Tom Courtenay movie of the same name; "The Chimbley Sweep" is a tale of a London street urchin whose tone lies somewhere between William Blake and Edward Gorey; and "Los Angeles, I'm Yours" is an improbably



rhapsodic paean to the City of Angels ("O what a rush of ripe elan!/Langor on divans/Dalliant and dainty!").

Obviously, any band that uses words like "langor" and "elan" in the same song (and then throws in a "dalliant" for good measure) doesn't mind if they come off as a little on the twee side. But there's a warm heart beating underneath the Decemberists' mannered vocabulary and arch literary references, if you look for it. And even Meloy seems to realize his songs will earn fans and detractors in equal numbers; as he sings on the gorgeous "I Was Meant for the Stage," "I was meant for applause/I was meant for derision." I give him applause. ★★★★ —PAUL MATYWCHUK

JIM BRYSON THE NORTH SIDE BENCHES (THE ORANGE RECORD LABEL)

When someone like the Lowest of the Low's Ron Hawkins drops an unfamiliar name during an interview, you pick it up. So when Hawkins suggested I check out an indie guy from Ottawa named Jim Bryson a couple of years ago, I nabbed *The Occasionals* when it arrived at the *Vue* office a few weeks later. Hawkins was right—the disc showcased Bryson's haunting, penetrating songwriting and his lush guitarwork (even though Bryson turned out to be a bit of a downer during my subsequent phone interview with him). But that was then and now, after backing the meteoric rise of Kathleen Edwards with his guitar, Bryson has a new disc out, one that should finally earn him some notice and more fans here in the west.

The North Side Benches open with "Sleeping in Toronto," but it's anything but an Upper Canadian album. Flirting with country but mostly sticking close to his pop-rock heart, Bryson is an earnest indie songsmith with observations and refrains as sharp as the bite of his crying guitar. As he admits, Bryson likes the da-da-das and the doo-doo-dos as well as the deep. And he seems to have found a fine balance. (Jim Bryson plays at the Power Plant on Saturday, September 13 with the George Bushes.) ★★★★ —DAN RUBINSTEIN

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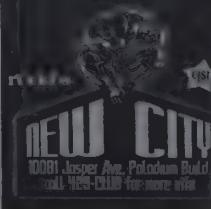
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Return to Splendor

By JOSEF BRAUN

Cartoonist Harvey Pekar watches his mundane but heroic life unfold again in *American Splendor*

When I asked Harvey Pekar how he initially felt when filmmakers Shari Springer Berman and Robert Pulcini approached him about turning *American Splendor*, his autobiographical comic book about his ordinary life working as a hospital file clerk in Cleveland, into a movie, he replied, "I was happy.

could use the money."

Despite his apparent reluctance to abandon his humble station in

PROFILE **INDIE**

life (even after *American Splendor* became a stable industry for Pekar, he continued to toil at the hospital until 2001), the perks of sudden cinema celebrity seem to be sitting well

with the 64-year-old author and radio commentator. (He gets enthusiastic about the little things, like being able to have his underwear dry-cleaned while the film was in production.) Perhaps watching his work (and his likeness—Pekar is one of the film's stars) being interpreted and manipulated by others is second nature to Pekar; after all, right from the beginning of his career he's placed his writing in the hands of a

Bang-on Harvey

One of comic book writer Harvey Pekar's many gifts is his ability to lift ordinary complaint and weariness to a place of humorous, graceful expression. He's managed to do this repeatedly since 1975 in a medium often restricted to fantastic melodrama and spandex pageantry, which makes the gift all the more remarkable. Written and directed by Shari Springer Berman and Robert Pulcini, a filmmaking team with a trio of documentary features behind them, *American Splendor* is the cinematic interpretation of Pekar's autobiographical comic series of the same name, and in a way the film feels like it's completing the process of bringing Pekar's cartoon Cleveland of heartbreak, shitty jobs and fleeting awe into full bloom.

Pekar the comic character has been illustrated by multiple artists over the years, and the *American Splendor* movie fittingly presents us with multiple figures portraying its underground man protagonist. Paul Giamatti, who recently gave such a delicate comic performance in Todd Solondz's *Storytelling*, plays the Pekar we see most, and he gives a wonderfully nuanced, deeply sympathetic and often hilarious perfor-

mance whose self-deprecation is aimed as squarely at Giamatti and his own personal shabbiness as it is at the oddly endearing, cranky, slobby Pekar. Giamatti's slumped shoulders, furrowed brow and dragging feet are a kind of physical poetry in themselves, articulating the turmoil of mundane survival, and Giamatti brings just the right weight to Pekar's many eloquent expressions of loneliness ("Sometimes I'd feel a body next to me the way an amputee feels a missing limb"). But

Giamatti's Pekar is also offset by several animated Pekars and Pekar himself, who intermittently appear in the film to crack a few jokes and even share some jellybeans with a nerdy old friend.

Hope Davis (*About Schmidt*) plays Pekar's wife Joyce Brabner (who co-authored *Our Cancer Year*, the graphic novel also dramatized in the film, a chronicle of the couple's struggle with Pekar's lymphoma) with equally brilliant quirks and compassion, driving the couple's contentious but deeply loving relationship with wit and credibility. Davis' performance as Brabner is likewise fleshed out by cameos from the real

Brabner, who shares some terrifically droll moments with Pekar between the dramatic segments. For comic/movie characters, Pekar and Brabner spend a great deal of time awkwardly coping with the constant trials of banal reality—in one of the movie's funniest scenes, Giamatti's Pekar comes straight out within seconds of first meeting her face to face and tells Davis' Brabner that he's had a vasectomy, just to avoid any future confusion. Battling cancer is shown in its grim harshness in *American Splendor*, but so is the battle to make a bed, wash the dishes or cohabit with another person.

Berman and Pulcini blur the boundaries of documentary and fiction in a manner designed not as an intellectual stunt but rather to emphasize the sheer peculiarity of autobiographical art and to correct all that frequently goes wrong with biopics when they portray an icon instead of a human being. And sloppy, sweaty humanity is what *American Splendor* painstakingly gives us. —JOSEF BRAUN

AMERICAN SPLITTER

Written and directed by Shari Springer Berman and Robert Pulcini • Starring Paul Giamatti and Hope Davis • Opens Fri, Sept 12

number of different artists (including his old friend Robert Crumb). In any case, though famously cranky, Pekar had only positive things to say about *American Splendor's* transition to the big screen, and he cracked me up more than once with his blunt candor and good nature.

Vue Weekly: Isn't there something a little eerie in people making a movie about your life?

Harvey Pekar: Nah, I don't mind. I'd been in touch with the people involved and figured if they couldn't make it a good movie then no one could, and they made a good movie. And they've proved to be good friends too. We had a lot of fun getting together.

VW: How involved were you in the film's development?

HP: Not much. As I say, I had confidence in these people and they had a clear direction they wanted to go in and, you know, seemed reasonable to me, so I stayed out of the way. I didn't want to be a pain in the ass and hover over these people while they're trying to work, and they complimented me at the end for not bugging them. If they were incompetents maybe I would've done something, but I never questioned their competence or their good will.

VW: Did you get to write your own lines?

HP: Well, a lot of that stuff's taken right out of my comic book.

VW: And how different is the portrait of you see in the film from that in your comic?

HP: I'd say it's essentially accurate. You know, [actor] Paul Giamatti wasn't trying to imitate me; he was trying to do an interpretation. So there's some of Paul in there as well as me. But I think he made a real

SEE NEXT PAGE



Hope Davis and Paul Giamatti in *American Splendor*



...and their real-life counterparts Joyce Brabner and Harvey Pekar

Shack attack

Cabin Fever bends the rules of Classic Teen Horror without breaking them

BY DARREN ZENKO

Might as well toss around the adjective "classic" a bit—it's been tossed around so much already, I'm pretty sure at this point there's no way I could throw it hard enough to break it. *Cabin Fever* is a teen horror movie in the classic style: that means woody seclusion, mostly bland leads, bare breasts, substance abuse, lusty girl-on-top jumprin' shot from the foot of the bed and, of course, blood by the bucketful—the inevitable gory retribution for the aforementioned sins.

But is this a good thing? I know the rigid operatic formalities of the genre require that slice follows vice, but do we really still need to be following rules that were created simply to justify lurid exploitation films as "educational"? Must bloody death at the hands of a machete-swinging zombie always be a sexually transmitted disease? Do horror films always need to feature survival of

the boringest?

No, no, no and no. But go too far in the opposite direction and you're just being willfully contrary; would audiences approve if the drunken pot-smoking date-rapest jock bully was the only survivor of The Maniac? With *Cabin Fever*, director/co-writer Eli Roth walks a fine line, trying to be fresh without being iconoclastic, "classic" without turning rigidly formulaic, and for the most part he succeeds without too much stumbling and weaving.

First of all, there's no maniac, no zombie, no ghost, no demon, no

VUE REVUE HORROR

renegade Catholic priest—nothing supernatural at all. *Cabin Fever* is a disease movie, a story about how a bunch of callow, egocentric, city-slippin' rich kids isolated in a shack with nothing but poplar trees and creepy rednecks for miles in any direction would deal with a sudden outbreak of the bloody, flesh-eating Ebola virus. It's *Masque of the Red Death* meets *Deliverance*, and it's refreshing—first for being a disease movie that doesn't involve a bunch of sexy scientists racing against a beeping digital readout, second for

being a teen horror film that doesn't involve yet another damn monster.

HERE'S ANOTHER REVERSAL: for our luckless high-school grads, drinking lots of booze isn't a one-way ticket to a *Fangoria* photo spread. Rather than dying in a red mist of arterial blood the minute their alcohol consumption crosses the AADAC threshold for "binge drinking," it's in fact a steady diet of nothing but beer that keeps a few of the characters alive (for a while). On the other hand, this twist is countered by a moment of instant sex karma that's almost perverse in its execution of the Laws of Horror, as a shy sweetheart's very first timorous grope of his beloved explodes into gory terror.

But is it scary? Sorta. The lack of a physical (or supernatural) antagonist to focus on means most of the scares and drama come from bloody shock-shots that are more shuddering than frightening, and even the advent of the homicidal hillbillies that populate the film's second half can't really make up for this shortcoming—in all the ways that matter, they're as much a force of nature as the virulent contagion that's causing all the problems.

Truly scary or not, *Cabin Fever* is at least fun, thanks mostly to a clever-



enough script and a few great performances, notably James DeBello as meathaded loudmouth Bert. Even in its tensest moments, *Cabin Fever* provides lots of laughs, most of which are intentional. Maybe that's why it feels like a return to "classic" style in a way that *Jeepers Creepers 2* totally didn't: it doesn't take itself too seriously and makes sure that whether they're biting their nails or holding their sides, the audience is entertained. ☀

CABIN FEVER

Written and directed by Eli Roth • Starring Rider Strong, Jordan Ladd, James DeBello and Cerina Vincent • Opens Fri, Sept 12

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Harvey Pekar

Continued from previous page

good, credible character and I'm satisfied with that.

VW: I'm curious how you feel about movies. The only reference to me in *American Splendor* is the scene where you go see *Revenge of the Nerds* and you're portrayed as being quite hostile to it.

HP: I'm generally not a movie fan, because most movies, you know, they're made to please the lowest common denominator. So consequently they're not very good. There's nothing wrong with the form, but people are trying to make money and stuff goes over the heads of the audience, they're not going to make any. So I don't go to a whole lot of films. Mainly I just see the ones my wife and kid want to see.

VW: Are there aspects of your personal life you've decided aren't suitable for dramatizing, or is anything that strikes you as interesting up for grabs?

HP: Yeah, that's pretty much it. I mean, I don't really, you know, show myself going to the toilet all the time or stuff like that.

VW: In the film at least, there's almost no mention made of your pre-adult life. Is that something you'd rather not see dramatized?

HP: I really haven't written much about my pre-adult life. I like to write about stuff that's happening to me right now because it's fresher in my mind. I've written stories about being a dad, but not too many because I don't remember them that well.

VW: So it's the details that matter.

HP: With me, yeah.

VW: You don't feel any compulsion to leave behind a complete memoir?

HP: Nah, not unless I could do a really good job of it. I'm just trying to record my life in the moment while I'm here.

VW: Obviously, your comics are quite distinct from most on the market and in the film we see you reading Theodore Dreiser and deeply connecting to his work. Would you say that your influences are more literary than pulp?

HP: Definitely, yeah. James Joyce, Henry Miller, George Ade.

VW: Hm. It seems to me that what these writers have in common with you is a desire to explore the lesser-examined details of life's most base experiences.

HP: Yeah that's what I'm trying to do, write about mundane events that shape our lives.

VW: So why'd you never choose to write a novel?

HP: I felt there was more room to be creative in comics, particularly because so little had been done with them. I like the form anyway, the way you can tell stories through panels. I tried writing short stories before but, you know, I've been working on comics for 30 years now and I don't see any reason to abandon them. They're a perfectly fine form for what I do.

VW: I want to ask about the sequences in the film involving your appearances on *Late Night With David Letterman*. For your first appearance on the show, we see you, the real you, on the real show, the last time,

however, we see Giamatti and a Letterman stand-in. I don't know if you can answer this, but I was curious why we don't see the original footage in that pivotal scene.

HP: Because they won't allow it to be seen. I guess they don't think it puts Letterman or NBC or GE in a good light.

VW: You developed problems with Letterman after openly addressing NBC's relationship with General Electric. Is that still an issue that you feel is important for people to recognize?

HP: Sure I think it's an important issue to be recognized. People don't see the huge conflict of interest involved there—it seems pretty obvious to me. But it's just the stupid American public.

VW: *American Splendor* has proved to be quite a political comic, certainly in terms of dealing with class issues. I wonder if you have an overall vision of what you've been trying to do all these years with it.

HP: I want to write about experiences other people can identify with, and I hope they can learn from and be comforted by the things I write.

VW: Paul Giamatti said of you, "He's a heroic figure in the sense that anybody who can get out of bed in the morning without putting a bullet in their head is a heroic figure." I wonder if this interpretation of what you represent to your audience washes with you.

HP: Sure, that's okay with me. I mean, life's pretty tough for some of us sometimes. Every day I try to get up and do what I'm supposed to do. That's about all I can tell you. ●



Chlorine with envy

Swimming Pool's acting and directing aren't splashy but the movie's still deep

BY PAUL MATWYCHUK

Swimming Pool is one of the slickest movie treats of the year. It's an evocative character study, a sardonic odd-couple sitcom, a Nicolas Cage-style murder mystery and one of those twist-at-the-end, argue-it-over-with-your-friends puzzlebox movies

I wrapped into me. But it's also such a quiet film, with a judiciously

REVIEW FOREIGN

understated score by Philippe Combi, and a wry, minimalistic central performance by Charlotte Rampling, that I think I underestimated the film immediately after watching it. It was only later that night, and the next day, and the week after that, and the month after that when I watched a second time and found myself still thinking about the film's many riddles, that I realized how far it had gone underneath my skin.

Rampling plays Sarah Morton, a British mystery novelist apparently modelled after prickly, old-maidish figures like Patricia Highsmith and Ruth Rendell, with a little P.D. James thrown in for good measure. She's the author of the bestselling "Inspector Dorwell" books, but John, her publisher (Charles Dance), sensing that she's growing sick of writing polite little whodunits for middle-aged women, suggests that she needs a change of scenery and offers to let her spend a few weeks in his cottage at Luberon, a small, picturesque village in the south of France. Sarah agrees and once she arrives in France, she soon settles into a solitary routine of writing and half-heartedly

exploring the town's shops and cafés.

But that routine is completely upended by the unexpected arrival, in the middle of the night, of John's estranged French daughter Julie (Ludovine Sagnier). You may recall Sagnier from writer/director François Ozon's previous film, *8 Women*, as the slightly dowdy "good girl" in the blunt haircut, the barrette and the lime-green slacks—but here she's been transformed into one of the more memorable teenage sluts in recent movie history. As Julie spends her days lolling, frequently topless, by the backyard pool and her nights bringing home a whole string of anonymous, hilariously repulsive sexual partners, she's quite a carnal spectacle—and

Sarah can't help but stare with a mixture of thin-lipped disapproval and wide-eyed fascination at her new housemate. And as Sarah starts rummaging through Julie's belongings and reading her diary, she decides to put Inspector Dorwell aside for a while and begin a new book inspired by Julie.

RAMPLING, LIKE SAGNIER, has also worked with Ozon before, in the moody drama *Under the Sand*. She got a lot of acclaim for that role, playing a widow trying to make sense of the world after the sudden death of her husband, but the film left me cold—to me, the whole story seemed predicated on a false, overly literary idea of human behaviour and I saw Rampling giving the same blank-slate performance she's been underwhelming audiences with for the last 35 years. (It's the kind of performance critics love to praise, though—by rhapsodizing over an actress in her fifties, they can demonstrate how refined their tastes are compared to those unimaginative moviegoers who'd rather watch somebody like, well, Ludovine Sagnier. Anyway, in *Swimming Pool*, Rampling gives the best, most enjoy-

able performance of her career—there's something in her eyes that suggests both Sarah's cool, British reserve as well as an icy vein of perversity lurking just underneath it. You can see that Sarah's not an obvious tramp like Julie; she's something a lot more slippery and dangerous.

But *Swimming Pool's* greatest triumph is that Ozon's direction and Rampling's performance operate so completely through suggestion and implication that even when the film is over, you still can't quite figure

Sarah out. Her frustrating relationship with John is one of the film's most tantalizing mysteries—you can't be sure if she wants him to be her lover or her father. Or both. And I don't want to give anything away, but the exact nature of her relationship with Julie turns out to be even more surprising and complicated than it initially appears. And since the screening copy of the film I was provided with had no subtitles for the French-language scenes, it was even more perplexing a puzzle for

me—there's a whole sequence where Sarah goes into the village and converses in French with a vaguely sinister dwarf that I wish someone could explain to me. I mean, come one—in movies like this, whenever dwarves tell the main character anything, it's always highly significant! ☀

SWIMMING POOL

Written and directed by François Ozon •

Starring Charlotte Rampling, Ludovine

Sagnier and Charles Dance •

Opens Fri, Sept 12

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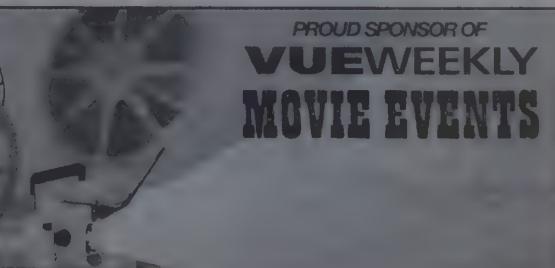
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MOVIE EVENTS

FILM WEEKLY

NEW THIS WEEK

American Splendor (CO) Paul Giamatti and Hope Davis star in writer/directors Shan Springer Berman and Robert Pulim's innovative film about a man who has given up his job as a file clerk at a Cleveland VA hospital, but unlikely rise to fame as the author of a series of autobiographical comic books and his near-fatal bout with lymphoma.

Brian Harris' Himalayan (VHS, DVD) Photographer Brian Harris hosts this multimedia digital presentation that features rare images of Buddhist Himalayan culture and showcases Seva Canada Society's site restoration projects in Tibet, India and Nepal. *Ziegler Hall, The Citadel*, Sat., Sept. 13 (7:30pm)

Cabin Fever (CO, FP) James DeBello, Joey Kern, Jordan Ladd and Rider Strong star in director Eli Roth's horror thriller about five college friends whose weekend trip to the woods is ruined when one by one, they fall victim to a gruesome, highly contagious flesh-eating virus.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (VHS) Clint Eastwood, Eli Wallach and Lee Van Cleef star in *Once Upon a Time in the West* director Sergio Leone's classic 1966 spaghetti Western about three gunslunging desperados vying to lay claim to a fortune in buried Confederate treasure. A restored 35mm print featuring 15 minutes of footage previously unseen in North America. *Ziegler Hall, The Citadel*, Fri., Sept. 12, Sun-Mon., Sept. 13-15 (7:30pm)

Matchstick Men (CO, FP) Nicolas Cage, Alison Lohman and Sam Rockwell star in *Gladiator* director Ridley Scott's offbeat comedy-drama about a career-ridiculed, obsessive-compulsive con man whose already precarious lifestyle is further destabilized when the teenage daughter he never knew had shows up on his doorstep. Based on the novel by Eric Garcia

Once Upon a Time in Mexico (CO, FP) Antonio Banderas, Johnny Depp, Salma Hayek and Willen Dafoe star in the final installment of writer/director Robert Rodriguez's *El Mariachi* trilogy, in which guitar-playing vigilante El Mariachi becomes involved in a complicated double-cross scheme involving the CIA, a powerful druglord, a corrupt general and the Mexican president.

Swimming Pool (P) Charlotte Rampling, Judi Dench, Sinead Cusack and Charles Dance star in *8 Women* writer/director Francois Ozon's psychological drama about a young English mystery novelist whose working vacation at a villa in southern France is disrupted by the unexpected arrival of her publisher's brazenly sexy teenage daughter. In English and French with English subtitles.

GARNEAU theatre
8712 - 109 Street - 433-0728
MAGDALENE SISTERS
Nightly 7:00 & 9:15 pm
Sat & Sun Matinee 2:00 pm
•14A• (In mature themes, disturbing content)

The War for Oil and Drug Money (M) Pundits Michael Ruppert and Michel Chossudovsky examine the U.S. government's knowledge of the September 11 attacks as well as the case for war in Afghanistan and Iraq in this topical documentary by local filmmaker Sheryle Carlson. Screening with *GNIN's Unsensored Questions*. *Ziegler Hall, The Citadel*, Thu., Sept. 11 (7pm)

Waterloo Bridge (EFS) Vivien Leigh and Robert Taylor star in *Little Caesar* director Mervyn LeRoy's classic 1940 tearjerker about a ballerina whose impetuous romance with a handsome British soldier leads to a series of tragic misfortunes and misunderstandings. *Provincial Museum Auditorium* (102 Ave & 128 St); Mon., Sept. 15 (8pm)

FIRST-RUN MOVIES

28 Days Later (CO) Gillian Murphy, Naomie Harris, Megan Burns, Christopher Eccleston and Brendan Gleeson star in *Trainspotting* director Danny Boyle's "thinking person's zombie thriller," about a small group of Londoners struggling to survive after a highly contagious virus turns nearly everyone in the world into bloodthirsty cannibals.

American Wedding (CO, FP) Jason Biggs, Alyson Hannigan, Eugene Levy and Sean William Scott star in *How High* director Jesse Dylan's third installment in the *American Pie* series, in which a new assortment of sexual hijinks and humiliations surround the marriage of party-humping Jim Levenstein and flute virtuoso Michelle Flaherty.

Bad Boys II (CO) Martin Lawrence, Will Smith, Gabrielle Union and Jon Pantoja star in *director Michael Bay's* sequel to his hit 1995 action comedy, in which feuding Miami detectives Marcus Burnett and Mike Lowrey must travel to London to aid Burnett's half-sister, an FBI agent working undercover as part of a drug ring.

Bruce Almighty (CO) Jim Carrey, Jennifer Aniston and Morgan Freeman star in *Liar Liar* director Tom Shadyac's comedy about a constantly complaining local TV reporter whom God endows with all His powers and challenges to make the world a better place.

Capturing the Friedmans (P) Director Andrew Jarecki's astonishingly intimate documentary about a Long Island family whose appearance of happiness and normalcy is shattered when the father and one of his sons are accused of repeatedly molesting neighbourhood children during the computer classes they teach in their basement.

Jeepers Creepers 2 (CO, FP) Jonathan Breck, Norton and Lynn Cohen star in *Twister* and *White* star in writer/director Victor Salva's sequel to his 2001 sleeper horror hit, in which a group of college basketball players and cheerleaders are beset by the Creeper, a flying, carnivorous monster with an insatiable appetite for human flesh.

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10337 - Whyte Ave. - 433-0728

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—Peter Travers, Entertainment Weekly

Capturing the Friedmans
Nightly 7:15 & 9:15 pm
Sat & Sun Matinees 2:30 pm
•14A• (theme of child sexual abuse)

PRINCESS THEATRE
10337 - Whyte Ave. - 433-0728

PRINCESS THEATRE<

FILM LISTINGS

Showtimes for Friday September 12 to Thursday, September 18

Showtimes are subject to change at any time.
Contact theatre for confirmation.

GARNEAU

8712-109 St, 433-0728

THE MAGDALENE SISTERS

14A
Themes, disturbing content
09 9.15 Sat Sun 2.00

PRINCESS

10337-82 Ave, 433-0728

CAPTURING THE FRIEDMANS

14A
Issues of child sexual abuse.
09 7.15 9.15 Sat Sun 2.00

SWIMMING POOL

18A
Issues of content.
09 9.00 Sat-Sun 2.00

METRO CINEMA

9828-101 Ave,
Citadel Theatre, 425-9212

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

G
Sun Mon 7.00

MALAYAN VISIONS AND BETAN VOICES

STC
19.00

UNDERGROUND ANIMATION

19.00

LEDUC CINEMAS

4762-50 St, 986-2728

ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

PG
Graphic violence
11.5 3.20 Daily 7.00 9.20

MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER

14A
Adult content. Sat Sun 1.10 3.00 Daily 7.10

KEEPERS CREEPERS 2

PG
Grossome violence. Daily 9.10

GRABSCUIT

PG
Some coarse language. Daily 7.30

OPEN RANGE

PG
Violent scenes. Daily 7.00 7.00

FINDING NEMO

PG
Sat Sun 1.20 3.20

FREDDY VS. JASON

18A
Gory violence throughout. Sat Sun 3.30 Daily 9.30

WETASKIWIN CINEMAS

(1) 780-352-3922

UPTOWN GIRLS

PG
09 7.00 9.25 Sat Sun 1.00 3.00

OPEN RANGE

14A
Violent scenes. Daily 7.00 9.25 Sat Sun 1.00 3.00

GRANDIN THEATRE

Grandin Mall, Sir Winston Churchill Ave,
St. Albert, 458-9822

ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

PG
Graphic violence

ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

18A
PG
In 11.10 1.10 3.20 Daily 7.15 9.20

SPY KIDS 3-D: GAME OVER

G
Sat Sun 11.15 1.20 3.10

THE ORDER

14A
PG
09 8.50

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN:

THE CURSE OF THE BLACK PEARL
PG
Issues of tiring scenes; not suitable for young children.
Sat Sun 12.50 3.30 Daily 6.45 9.30

FREAKY FRIDAY

G
09 11.00 1.00 3.00 Daily 7.00 9.00

DICKIE ROBERTS: FORMER CHILD STAR

PG
Some language, crude content

Sat Sun 11.20 1.30 3.30 Daily 7.10 9.10

CINEPLEX ODEON CINEMAS

CINEMA GUIDE

CITY CENTRE

10200-102 Ave, 421-7020

ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

PG
Graphic violence

ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

18A
PG
09 7.10 1.30 4.20 7.00 9.20

MATCHSTICK MEN

14A
PG
09 1.00 3.50 7.20 10.10

GRABSCUIT

PG
09 10.45 7.40 9.45

OPEN RANGE

14A
PG
Violent scenes. Daily 12.50 3.50 6.50 9.45

SPY KIDS 3-D: GAME OVER

G
Sat Sun 11.15 1.20 3.30 Daily 7.10 9.10

THE ORDER

14A
PG
09 1.20 4.00 6.50 9.10

DICKIE ROBERTS: FORMER CHILD STAR

PG
Some language, crude content

09 1.10 3.30 6.30 9.00

DIRTY PRETTY THINGS
14A
Mature themes; disturbing content
Fr-Sun Tue-Thu 2.00 4.40 7.50 10.00 Mon 2.00
4.40 10.00

S.W.T.
14A
Daily 1.40 4.30 7.30 10.05

**PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN:
THE CURSE OF THE BLACK PEARL**
PG
Frightening scenes; not suitable for young children
Fr-Tue Thu 12.45 3.40 7.50 9.40
Wed 12.45 3.40 9.40

WEST MALL 8

8882-170 St, 444-1829

OPEN RANGE
14A
Violent scenes. Fr Mon-Thu 6.50 9.50
Sat-Sun 1.40 4.00 6.50 9.50

WHALE WATCH
PG
Fr Mon-Thu 6.55 9.20 Sat-Sun 1.20 3.40 6.5-7.20

LE DIVORCE
PG
Mature themes. Fr Mon-Thu 7.20
Sat-Sun 2.00 4.30 7.20

SEABISCUIT
PG
Some coarse language. Fr Mon-Thu 6.45 9.45
Sat-Sun 1.00 3.50 6.45 9.45

TERMINATOR 3: RISE OF THE MACHINES
14A
Violence throughout. Fr Mon-Thu 7.30 9.55
Sat-Sun 1.40 4.20 7.30 9.55

BRUCE ALMIGHTY
PG
Coarse language. Fr Mon-Thu 7.10 9.30
Sat-Sun 1.30 4.10 7.10 9.30

BAD BOYS II
18A
Coarse language. Fr Mon-Thu 6.40 9.40
Sat-Sun 3.30 6.30 9.40

28 DAYS LATER
18A
Gory violence. Daily 10.00

FINDING NEMO
G
Fr Mon-Thu 7.00 9.10 Sat-Sun 1.50 4.15 7.00 9.10

CLAREVIEW

4211-139 Ave, 472-7600

ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
18A
Graphic violence. No passes
Daily 12.35 2.45 5.00 7.00 9.00

MATCHSTICK MEN
14A
Daily 12.50 3.40 6.50 9.50

THE ORDER
14A
Daily 1.30 4.00 7.50 10.15

DICKIE ROBERTS: FORMER CHILD STAR
PG
Coarse language, crude content
Daily 12.40 2.50 5.10 7.30 9.40

JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
14A
Grossome scenes. Daily 1.20 3.50 7.40 10.00

FREDDY VS. JASON
18A
Gory violence throughout. Daily 7.00 9.30

S.W.T.
14A
Daily 12.45 3.00 7.20 10.10

FREAKY FRIDAY
G
Crude content. Daily 12.30 2.45 4.55 7.05 9.20

AMERICAN WEDDING
18A
Crude content. Daily 1.10 3.30 6.30 9.10

SPY KIDS 3-D: GAME OVER
G
Daily 12.20 2.30 4.50

**PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN:
THE CURSE OF THE BLACK PEARL**
PG
Frightening scenes; not suitable for young children
Daily 12.15 3.15 6.45 9.45

SOUTH EDMONTON COMMON

10555 84 St, 444-5000

ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
18A
Graphic violence. No passes. On 2 screens
Thx Daily 1.15 2.15 4.00 5.10 7.00 8.00 9.40 10.40

MATCHSTICK MEN
14A
Daily 1.30 4.15 7.15 10.00

CABIN FEVER
18A
Grossome scenes. Daily 1.20 3.40 5.50 8.20 10.45

KUCH NAA KAHO
G
Subtitled. Thx Daily 1.00 5.00 9.00

THE ORDER
14A
No passes. Thx Daily 2.00 4.40 7.30 9.50

JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
14A
Grossome violence. Fr-Tue Thu 2.40 5.15 8.15
10.45 Wed 2.40 10.45

LE DIVORCE
PG
Mature themes. Daily 12.40 3.30 6.40 9.20

OPEN RANGE
14A
Violent scenes. Daily 12.50 3.50 6.50 9.45

FREDDY VS. JASON
18A
Gory violence throughout. Daily 9.10

S.W.T.
14A
Gory violence throughout. Daily 9.10

AMERICAN WEDDING
18A
Crude content. Daily 2.10 5.20 7.45 10.10

SPY KIDS 3-D: GAME OVER
G
Some coarse language. Daily 1.45 4.50 8.10

SPY KIDS 3-D: GAME OVER
14A
Fr Sat Mon-Thu 12.45 2.45 4.45 6.45 6.45
Sun 12.45 2.45 4.45 6.45 6.45

BAD BOYS II
18A
Gory violence, crude content, may offend
Daily 10.15

**PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN:
THE CURSE OF THE BLACK PEARL**
PG
Frightening scenes; not suitable for young children
Fr-Sun Thu 12.30 6.30 9.30 Sat 2.30 9.30
Thx Daily 1.10 4.10 7.20 10.20

FINDING NEMO
G
Daily 12.30 3.00 5.30 7.50

UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN
PG
Not suitable for younger children.
No passes. Sneak preview. Sat 7.00

SECONDHAND LIONS
STC
No passes. Sneak preview. Sun 4.45

WEST MALL 6
18A
8882-170 St, 444-1331

**LEGALLY BLONDE 2:
RED, WHITE AND BLONDE**
PG
Fr Mon-Thu 7.00 9.30 Sat-Sun 3.45 7.00 9.30

THE HULK
PG
Frightening scenes, not suitable for younger children. Fri Mon-Thu 6.30 9.30
Sat-Sun 3.30 6.30 9.30

SEABISCUIT
PG
Some coarse language. Fr Mon-Thu 6.45 9.45
Sat-Sun 1.00 3.50 6.45 9.45

2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
14A
Violent scenes. Fr Mon-Thu 7.30 10.00 Sat-Sun 1.30 4.30 7.30 10.00

FINDING NEMO
G
Fr Mon-Thu 6.40 8.40 Sat-Sun 2.40 4.40 6.40 8.40

GALAXY CINEMAS @ SHERWOOD PARK
2020 Sherwood Drive,
416-0150

ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
18A
Graphic violence. No passes
Fr 4.20 7.15 9.55 Mon-Thu 4.20 7.15 9.55

MATCHSTICK MEN
14A
Fr 12.30 2.40 5.00 7.00 9.55

THE ORDER
14A
Fr 1.30 4.00 7.50 10.15

DICKIE ROBERTS: FORMER CHILD STAR
PG
Coarse language, crude content. Fr 1.30 4.00 6.50 9.10

JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
14A
Grossome violence. Fr 1.30 4.00 6.50 9.10 Mon-Thu 1.30 4.00 6.50 9.10

SPY KIDS 3-D: GAME OVER
G
Fr 4.00 5.00 2.00 4.00 6.00 8.00

OPEN RANGE
PG
Fr 3.00 4.00 9.25 Sat-Sun 12.05 3.00 6.00 9.25 Mon-Thu 6.30 9.25

SEABISCUIT
PG
Some coarse language. Daily 8.45

**PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN:
THE CURSE OF THE BLACK PEARL**
PG
Frightening scenes, not suitable for young children.
Fr 1.30 4.00 6.50 9.10 Sat-Sun 1.30 4.00 6.50 9.10

THE HULK
PG
Frightening scenes, not suitable for younger children. Fr 1.30 4.00 6.50 9.10 Sat-Sun 1.30 4.00 6.50 9.10

THE CRADLE
PG
Violent scenes. Fr 4.00 5.00 6.00 7.00 8.00 9.00 Sat-Sun 4.00 5.00 6.00 7.00 8.00 9.00

CHARLIE'S ANGELS: FULL THROTTLE
PG
Violent scenes. Fr 1.30 4.00 6.00 7.00 8.00 9.00 Sat-Sun 1.30 4.00 6.00 7.00 8.00 9.00

THE MEDALLION
PG
Fr 1.30 4.00 5.00 6.00 7.00 8.00 9.00 Sat-Sun 1.30 4.00 5.00 6.00 7.00 8.00 9.00

UPSTAIRS GIRLS
PG
Violent scenes. Fr 1.30 4.00 5.00 6.00 7.00 8.00 9.00 Sat-Sun 1.30 4.00 5.00 6.00 7.00 8.00 9.00

DAVID BOWIE LARGE 'N' LIVE
STC
Mon 7.00

FREAKY FRIDAY
G
Fr Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu 12.55 3.30 6.40 9.10 Sat 12.55 3.30 9.10

JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
14A
Grossome violence. Fr Sat Sun Tue Wed Thu 1.20 4.00 6.55 9.35 Mon 1.20 4.00 9.35

**PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN:
THE CURSE OF THE BLACK PEARL**
PG
Frightening scenes, not suitable for young children.
Fr 1.20 4.00 6.50 9.10 Sat-Sun 1.20 4.00 6.50 9.10

S.W.T.
14A
Fr Sat Sun Mon Tue Thu 1.05 3.50 6.50 9.30 Wed 1.05 3.50 6.50 9.30

MATCHSTICK MEN
14A
Fr Sat Sun Mon Tue Thu 1.05 3.50 6.50 9.30 Wed 1.05 3.50 6.50 9.30

WILDERNESS THEATRE
14A
Fr Sat Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu 1.05 3.50 6.50 9.30

THE HUNTER
14A
Fr Sat Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu 1.05 3.50 6.50 9.30

HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
14A
Fr Sat Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu 1.05 3.50 6.50 9.30

2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
14A
Violent scenes. Sat Sun 1.10 3.10 5.10 7.10 9.10

DADDY DAY CARE
G
Fr Sat Sun 1.10 3.10 5.10 7.10 9.10

IDENTITY
G
Gory violence. Daily 10.05

ANGER MANAGEMENT
14A
Gory violence. Daily 10.05

THE ORDER
14A
Daily 2.10 4.30 6.50 7.25 10.00

DICKIE ROBERTS: FORMER CHILD STAR
PG
Coarse language, crude content. Daily 2.10 4.30 7.25 10.00

JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
14A
Grossome violence. Daily 2.10 4.30 7.25 10.00

THE ITALIAN JOB
14A
Daily 2.10 4.30 6.50 7.25 10.00

OPEN RANGE
PG
Violent scenes. Fr Sat Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu 1.20 4.00 6.50 9.30

S.W.T.A.
14A
Daily 2.10 4.30 6.50 7.25 10.00

FREAKY FRIDAY
G
Daily 2.10 4.30 7.25 10.00

AMERICAN WEDDING
18A
Crude content. Daily 2.10 4.30 7.25 10.00

SEABISCUIT
PG
Some coarse language. Daily 2.10 4.30 7.25 10.00

SPY KIDS 3-D: GAME OVER
G
Fr Sat Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu 1.20 4.00 6.50 9.30

**PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN:
THE CURSE OF THE BLACK PEARL**
PG
Frightening scenes, not suitable for young children.
Fr 1.20 4.00 6.50 9.30 Sat-Sun 1.20 4.00 6.50 9.30

THE HUNK
PG
Frightening scenes, not suitable for younger children. Sat Sun 10.40 12.40 1.10 3.10 5.10 7.10 9.10

HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
14A
Fr Sat Sun 1.10 3.10 5.10 7.10 9.10

2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
14A
Violent scenes. Sat Sun 1.10 3.10 5.10 7.10 9.10

DADDY DAY CARE
G
Fr Sat Sun 1.10 3.10 5.10 7.10 9.10

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ARTS



Wings of desire

Xiao Nan Yu adds another feather to her cap with *The Firebird*

BY MIKAYLA MAYER

"The Firebird is an exotic creature that is not ordinary—it's not something we see every day." That's how Xiao Nan Yu, principal dancer with the National Ballet describes her role in *The Firebird*, one of two ballets her company will be performing at the Jubilee Auditorium this weekend, but she could just as easily be describing herself. Nan's flight up the ranks of the National Ballet has been swift—she

trained at the Shen Yang School of Dance and the Beijing Dance Academy in China but came to Canada to work with the National Ballet when Mavis Staines, a panel judge at a competition in Lausanne, Switzerland, offered her a scholarship. She was 18 at the time; now 25 and married, she has nothing but gratitude for the company and especially fel-

PREVIEW DANCE

low dancer Rex Harrington, who she first performed with in February 2000 as Tatiana in *Onegin*.

"He was my partner in my first full-length ballet," Nan says. "His generosity is such a great memory. He's really there to take care of you, to help you, to bring out the best of yourself when

you're onstage." Harrington had first danced *Onegin* in 1996 opposite Evelyn Hart—it was his debut performance as principal dancer with the National Ballet. Since then, Harrington has earned a reputation as Canada's most accomplished male dancer, and the National Ballet marking his 20th year with the company by preparing a season featuring him in all of his signature roles—including choreographer (and National Ballet artistic director) James Kudelka's staging of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*, which makes up the other half of the weekend's performance.

"And he's perfect for it!" exclaims Nan. (She's not the only one to hold that opinion; a film adaptation of the ballet broadcast by the CBC as part of its TV series *Opening Night* won Harrington a Gemini Award for Best Performance in a Performing Arts Program.) "It's definitely with Rex that magic happened onstage. I did *The Merry Widow* with him and we just connected. Our emotion, our body movement, our breathing became one. It's really wonderful to have somebody that you can share that magic with onstage.... I was totally falling in love with him when we were dancing as Tatiana and Onegin. We just got totally lost in the music in the story, in our own movement."

IN THE FIREBIRD, an adaptation of Russian folktales originally commissioned 1910 by Diaghilev's Ballet Russes and set to the music of Igor Stravinsky, Nan once again finds herself in a swoon over a handsome partner. "She flies in, she flies out, she falls in love with the Prince," she says, describing her ethereal character. "I grew up in China where there are many creatures you don't see that you've been told about. I relate to those ghostly stories; [it's a Russian fable] but I can relate to it as part of Chinese culture." Kudelka's version of the ballet reflects a similarly multicultural attitude thanks to the Mayan and aboriginal-influenced set and costume design by Santo Loquasto.

Nan has many years to go if she's to equal Harrington's record of longevity, but she eagerly awaits future challenges. "As a ballerina," she says, "we all have the elegant style, but sometimes I wonder what would be like to do something different and see where it would lead me. For instance, to play Katherine in *The Taming of the Shrew*, who is really going and unladylike." In the meantime, she's expanding her horizons by performing in such contemporary ballets as Dominique Dumais's *One Hundred Words for Snow*; she's also working on a new piece titled *Moment* and starts work in late October on a new production of, yes, *Onegin*.

Seeing as how she lost her heart the first time she performed *Onegin*, it seems like simple recklessness to perform it all over again, and I ask her how many times a person can possibly fall in love. She laughs and replies, "Not enough!"

THE FIREBIRD AND THE FOUR SEASONS

Choreographed by James Kudelka
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Throwing it all away

Jeremy Isao Speier rescues the detritus of everyday life in *Kinetics*

BY AGNIESZKA MATEJKO

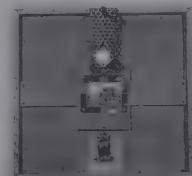
If you're like me, you know that once you fall into the irritating habit of constantly glancing at your watch, it quickly becomes more addictive than smoking. Watches, like cigarettes, ought to carry warning labels: "Warning, excessive preoccupation with this product may lead to the following health problems...." The list would never fit on a watch. Yet it's so hard to stop. Something always needs to be done by 30, by tomorrow, by the end of the month, and I and my large cohort of watch addicts can only dream of exotic places where we don't even have the silly things dangling off our wrists, controlling our every move. What would, say, a nomadic tribesman from the Kalahari say if we saw millions of us running round commanded by the incessant ticking of a rotating dial?

Jeremy Isao Speier (the unusual name is the result of a Japanese moth-

er and a Jewish father) is not exactly a Kalahari Bushman, but he is a kind of a cross-cultural shaman. As I rush in to look at his installation *Kinetics*, it seems that the fast-forward motion of racing time has momentarily (and thankfully) come to a complete stop. All around me a myriad of clocks turn in a slow, dancelike proces-

passing by and we take the moments for granted."

The square dials of these unusual clocks are created from the simple objects that make up life's most ordi-

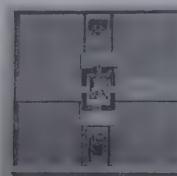


sion. Their moving hands are made of ordinary, discarded objects that look like they came from some dirty corner of a back alley—the kind of stuff that real time, "important time," is definitely not made of. There's a handle of a zipper, a rusty razor blade and an old radio tuning dial, all rotating silently. "The movement of the tuning wheel is slow and constant," says Isao Speier. "It goes back to the idea that life keeps going, keeps



nary moments. There are bits of white fenceposts reminiscent of idyllic childhood days spent in the backyard and parts of swings that dangle invitingly. Sepia-coloured photographs adorn the centre of the clock faces.

Isao Speier scavenged them over the years, not so much raiding his own family albums as collecting them from the daily snapshots of unknown people. "I look for images that are mysterious, intriguing, images that have presence," he explains. But he avoids anything that might be considered conven-



ally "important," like a wedding or a graduation picture. "The photographs relate to the messier aspects of life, the mundane moments, the gritty moments of everyday life," he says. "I find being an artist is all about moments, about parts, and I want to cull them."

ISAO SPEIER'S installation could have easily descended into a garbage heap of unwanted memories; after

all, collecting small moments is not a significant subject for a respectable Ph.D. thesis—or an art show. As far as all of us clockwatchers are concerned, time is precious. When there are so many pressing errands to cross off our to-do lists, looking at rusty razor blades and snapshots of perfect strangers doing unimportant things just doesn't cut it.

So what makes this show worth the time of at least this one watch addict? Isao Speier turned his chaotic collection of moments into secular icons; his trivial odds and ends are carefully arranged into the powerful symbol of the cross. But Isao Speier has taken the cross out of the Christian context, except it isn't Christ who is at the centre, but the fleeting moment. The moment as sacred and worthwhile is something that Isao Speier may have learned to cherish as a child while he watched his mother prepare food with careful, ritualized gestures, something that his father's ethnic tradition neglected. Isao Speier's show takes the castoffs of Western culture, all the rusty blades and the discarded moments, and gives them a new life. ☀

KINETICS

By Jeremy Isao Speier • Latitude 53 • To October 4

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BY PAUL MATWYCHUK

Meer-a-thon man

Die-Nasty Soap-a-Thon • Varscona Theatre • Fri, Sept 12 (6pm)-Sun, Sept 14 (11pm) • preVUE I've always admired the ability of indefatigable improvisers like Mark Meer to participate in the Die-Nasty Soap-a-Thon and be just as funny in their 53rd straight hour onstage as they were in, say, Hour Three. But my admiration turned into awe at last year's Soap-a-Thon; for the first time, I decided to camp out in my favourite seat

at the Varscona Theatre and try watching all 53 hours of the annual all-improvised soap opera—only to promptly fall asleep somewhere in the middle of Hour Six.

"Well," says Meer diplomatically, "I'd say it is easier to stay awake when you're onstage. The performers get to move around and talk while the audience has to sit there and watch. And I'll admit that at lot of times I have to get up and pace when we get into the later stages of the Soap-a-Thon because if you just sit there, it starts to feel a little like watching TV. You do start to drift."

Not that Meer would ever let the demands of the Soap-a-Thon get the better of him; this weekend, he'll be attempting to go the distance for the seventh time. "In fact," he says, "I feel like I could go for another entire day—for 77 hours instead of 53. The last few years have actually gotten easier for me; I think my body is just conditioned at this point to know that I do this at the same time every year. Usually there comes a time where I really hit the

wall, and that didn't happen last year."

Perhaps the most memorable moment of last year's Soap-a-Thon was Ron Pederson's final scene, in which his character bade a tender goodbye to Patti Stiles. Since it would only be a few days before Pederson himself would leave Edmonton to start filming *Mad TV* in Los Angeles, the scene had a layer of poignancy that everyone in the audience picked up on—even the ones sitting too far away to see the tears in Stiles's eyes. Well, now the entire *Die-Nasty* troupe is heading to Hollywood—or at least to the Toronto International Film Festival, where this year's Soap-a-Thon is set.

Meer says he hasn't nailed down what character he'll be playing yet, but some of the ideas he's toying with include some kind of spoof of uncouth *Inside the Actor's Studio* host James Lipton or some sort of role that will let him do his uncanny Robert De Niro imitation. "I do know," he says, "that at one point, Donovan Workun and I want to play a pair of porn directors named Hot

Carl and Dirty Sanchez.... Of course, in the *Soap-a-Thon*, your character can get thrown right out the window by the second scene. Last year, I did a character called the Lava Monster who I thought I'd play only for a scene or two, and I wound up doing him for 36 hours."

There's awards goin' on

None of the awards at the real-life Toronto Film Festival will go to characters in the *Soap-a-Thon*, but *Die-Nasty* might win a prestigious real-life arts prize this weekend all the same. The Canadian Comedy Awards are being handed out this Saturday, and *Die-Nasty* has been nominated in the "Pretty Funny Improv Troupe" category. Cathleen Rootsaert will be their representative at the ceremony in London, Ontario and will no doubt find a way to incorporate their victory or loss into the *Soap-a-Thon* plotline.

If they win, it'll be the second improv prize claimed by Edmonton actors in less than two weeks. Jacob Banigan, Chris Craddock, Josh Dean and Mark Meer of Rapid Fire Theatre are newly returned from Atlanta, Georgia, where they beat out a hometown Atlanta squad as well as teams from Los Angeles, Vienna, Vancouver, Phoenix and Seattle to take first place in the *World Domination Theatresports Tournament* for the fourth time in the event's seven-year history. You can see these same world-beaters in action for yourself next weekend when Theatresports (September 19) and Chimpy (September 20) kick off their new seasons of unscripted live comedy. Bring suggestions.

Growth industry

Excess Unwanted Growth • The Thin Space (11315-106 St) • To Sept 13 **revUE** *Excess Unwanted Growth* is a comedy about a sentient half-human, half-fungus that emerges from a pile of dishes that have gone unwashed for several weeks. There's nothing inherently funny about that idea—what is funny, however, is the sight of the strange creature (played winningly by Matthew Kloster), sitting in an armchair into several hours of the morning, improving its mind by eagerly poring over a well-thumbed copy of *Voltaire's Bastards*.

This one-act by David Owen feels more like an extended sketch than fully fleshed-out comedy—Owen seems to completely run out of ideas for the main character, a devoutly slovenly couch potato played by Kris Loranger as soon as he finishes his opening monologue—but there are enough nutty throwaway gags knocking around inside it to make it fairly worthwhile.

The evening is rounded out by five short *Monty Python*-esque skits, also by Owen, and they're pretty hit-and-miss. (The best is probably *Why Are You Here?*, an exercise in looped dialogue.) As you may have figured out, Owen is more interested in cracking postmodernist jokes than creating comic characters; as a result, his material can feel a little on the thin side, even though most of his gags are pretty good. *Python* fans eager for a fix of absurd comedy ought to enjoy it, but others may find *Excess Unwanted Growth* well, a bit wanting. ☺

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ARTS WEEKLY

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DANCE

THE FIREBIRD AND THE FOUR SEASONS Jubilee Hall, 11455-87 Ave (428-6819/451-8728) • The Royal Ballet of Canada presents The Firebird, choreographed by James Kudelka with music by Igor Stravinsky, featuring dancer Rex Harrington along with Mirella Freni in the world premiere of Antonio Vivaldi's The Four Seasons. Sept. 16-17 (8pm). Tickets available at TicketMaster REVEALED BY FIRE See What's Happening Downtown

GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

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CHRISTI BERGSTROM'S RED GALLERY 82-82 Ave (434-8210) • Open Mon-Fri 11am-5pm • OH BEING DIADATIC (BUT NOT NECESSARILY PEDANTIC): Paintings by Christi Bergstrom; until January • A VIEW TO FISHTANDING: Portraits by Christi Bergstrom; until

CITY HALL See What's Happening Downtown

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EXTENSION CENTRE GALLERY 2nd Fl FI University Extension Centre, 8303-112 St (492-3034) • Open Mon-Fri 8am-8pm; Sat 9am-noon • JOININGS: Paintings by Doug Barry, bronze sculptures and paintings by LP (Larry Barry) • Until Sept. 24

FINNE ARTS BUILDING GALLERY Room 1-1, Fine Arts Building, 112 St, 89 Ave U of A Campus (492-2081) • Open Tues-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 2pm-5pm • REMOTE DAWNING: With Shawn Serfas (Master of Fine Arts Capstone exhibition) • A SHIMMERING SECOND: Drawings by Noelle Boyle (Master of Fine Arts in drawing exhibition) • Until Sept. 13 • Opening reception: THU, Sept. 11 (7-10pm)

PORT DOOR 10308-81 Ave (432-7535) • Open Mon-Wed, Sat 10am-6pm; Thu and Fri 10am-9pm; Sun 12-5pm • Eskimo stone carvings, otters and Inuk by K. Inukpuk West Coast Indian and Eskimo silver and gold jewellery by G. Henry • Until Sept. 30

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JEFF ALLEN ART GALLERY Strathcona Place, 10831 University Ave (433-5807) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-4pm • Artworks by the instructors of arts and crafts for the Centre • Until Sept. 25

JOHNSON GALLERY 7711-85 St (465-6171)
• Open Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm; Sat 9am-5pm • Oils paintings by Don Sharpe, Dennis Clark. Pastels and oil paintings by Wendy Riddle • Watercolours by Jim Brager and pottery by Halena Ball, Peggy Heer. Cards by Yardley Jones • Until Sept. 30

JOHNSON GALLERY 11817-80 St (479-8424) • Open Mon-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm; Sat 9:30am-4pm • Artworks by Jim Painter, Andrew Reilman, Jim Brager, Audrey Plannmiller. Prints by Toti, pottery by Linda Nelson and Noburo Kubo • Until Sept. 30

LATTITUDE 53 See What's Happening Downtown

THE LITTLE CHURCH GALLERY 455 King St, Spruce Grove (962-0664) • SOMETHING DIFFERENT: Paintings by Dennis J.A. Brown • Until Sept. 13

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INDIA: MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC ART GALLERY 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Open 11am-4pm • New paintings by Carolyn Chmilar • Sept. 11-Oct. 20 • Opening reception, artist in attendance: Sun, Sept. 21 (1-3pm)

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SEGHERS STUDIO GALLERY See What's Happening Downtown

SNAP GALLERY See What's Happening Downtown

SNOWBIRD GALLERY WEM, 8882-170 St (488-1024)
• Work by J. Yardley-Jones and Gregg Johnson, acrylics by Jim Vest, pottery by Noboru Kubo and Jacqueline Stenberg

SPECTRUM ART GALLERY AND STUDIO 11745 Jasper Ave (482-6677) • Open daily 10am-6pm • Paintings by Christopher Lucas, Patricia Young, Bridgit Turner, Deanna Larson and David Phillips

STANLEY A. MILNER LIBRARY See What's Happening Downtown

VAAL GALLERY 3rd Fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-1731) • **BEADS AND PIXELS**: Beaded sculptures and digital paintings by Renée van der Putten and Ansard Thomson; until Sept. 27

WEST END GALLERY 12308 Jasper Ave (488-4892)
• Paintings of fruit by Heather Graham, Sept. 13-26

• Opening reception: Sat, Sept. 13 (10am-5pm)

WORKS GALLERY See What's Happening Downtown

LITERARY

BACKROOM VODKA BAR 10134-82 Ave, upstairs www.backroomvodka.com • Open poetry stage and impromptu music by the Raving Poets Band • Every Tue (8pm)

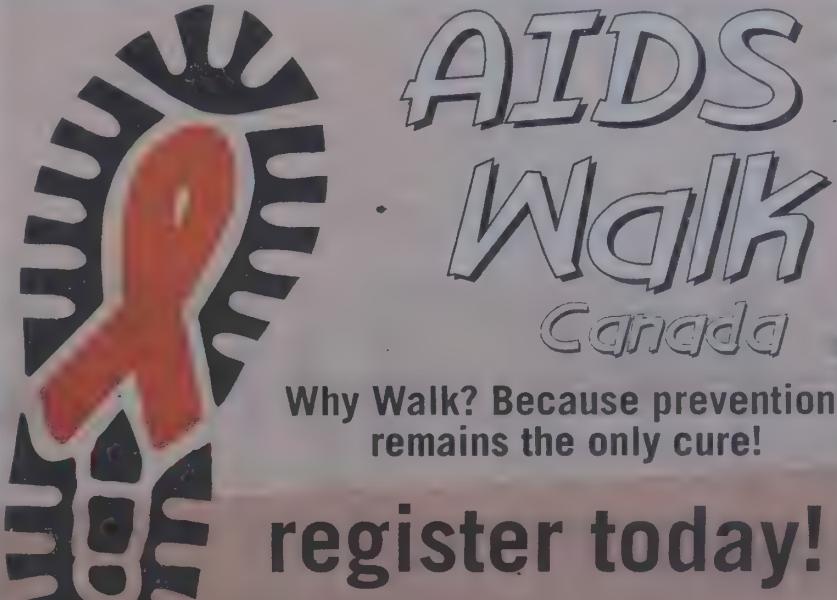
HOLIDAY INN CONVENTION CENTRE 4520-76 Ave (432-9427) • Reading and book launch of *Big Rig 2: More Come Tales From a Long Haul Trucker* by Don McTavish • Sat, Sept. 13 (2pm)

LIVE COMEDY

THE COMEDY FACTORY 1414 Gateway Boulevard (469-4999) • Fri, Sept. 12-Sat, Sept. 13: Mike Jenkins

FARGO'S 11821 82 Ave (433-4526) • Fargo's Laugh-a-Lot Comedy • Every Sun

SEE NEXT PAGE



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HIV/AIDS WALK • A RED RIBBON EVENT
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

CITY HALL - 1 SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL SQUARE
A 6 km, police escorted walk through central Edmonton.

EVENT SCHEDULE:

- 11:30-12:45 pm Check in & entertainment
- 12:45 pm Welcome/ Warm Up
- 1:00 am-2:45 pm Walk
- 2:45 pm Speeches & prizes!
- 4:00 pm Party at the Roost



PLEASE BRING A NON-PERISHABLE FOOD DONATION FOR THE EDMONTON FOOD BANK



SCRUFFY MURPHY'S Whitmud Crossing (485-1717) • Pints and punchlines comedy night 4 Every Thu (9pm)

THEATRE

THE BALLAD OF ISABEL GUNN Azimuth Theatre, 7131-1/06 Ave (454-0583) • Murray Utas directs Rene Bonnett in Stephen Scobie's one-woman show, based on the amazing story of a woman who in 1806 disguised herself as a man in order to join her lover, an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company. With live music by Chic Callas • Sept. 12-21 (8pm), no Monday performance • \$10.

EVENTS WEEKLY

For your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to list@vive.ab.ca. Deadline is Friday at 3pm

CLUBS/LECTURES

ARTHURIS CONFERENCE www.artsociety.org • Sept. 13 (8am-4pm) • \$30 • Gateway Blvd (424-1740) • Artworks and topics presented by the Arthritics Society • Sat. Sept. 20 (9am-4pm) • \$30 (member)/\$40 (non-member) • Pre-register

ASSOCIATION FOR SALE ALTERNATIVES TO CHILD BIRTH • University Conference Centre (430-9431) • Conversation with Dr. Michel Odent; Tue, Sept. 16 (8:30am-noon); \$40 (\$10 student) • Stanley A. Milner Library Theatre: See What's Happening Downtown

CAT SHOW See What's Happening Downtown

FOUR TEASONS INDIAHOUSE SPEAKER SERIES www.indiahouse.ca • What's Happening Downtown

A LUNCHEON WITH ROBERT F. KENNEDY JR. Mayfield Inn, 1661-1/09 Ave (1-403-503-8800) • Discussion of the environment and water presented by Mosai Projects • Sept. 13 (11am-1:15pm)

MANAGING MODERN DAY STRESS FROM A TIBETAN BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE See What's Happening Downtown

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS: THE INSIDE STORY (MSRS) MS Victory Centre, 1120-1/07 St (471-3034) • MSRS, a six week series of discussions including the symptoms of MS, symptom management, research and more • Even Thu starting Sept. 11 (7-9pm) • \$25/\$45 (couple)/\$35 (family) • Pre-register

SECOND CHANCE: A TIME FOR HEALING AND HOPE See What's Happening Downtown

SHRIMPTIME CHURCH INTO THE FUTURE TENSE King's University College, 9125-50 St (465-3500, ext 8072) • Lectures by Dr. Tom Sine and Dr. Christine Sine • Wed. Sept. 17 (8pm) • Free

T.A.L.E.S. EDMONTON (433-2932) • Storytelling Invitation: every 2nd Fri (8pm) • The oral tradition of storytelling (be a listener or a storyteller)

TALKING ABOUT GRIEF See What's Happening Downtown

THE TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY, GADEN SAMTEN LINQ 11403-101 St (479-0014) • Learn about Tibetan Buddhism and meditation with Kusok Dhamchoe of Namgyal Monastery in India • Every Tues (7-9pm): beginners • Every Wed (7-9pm) and Sun (11am-1pm): advanced

WALKINGMEN TIRNA ASSOCIATION • McDonald Mall, MacDonald's, 30 St, 118 Ave (417-2524) • Free guided hike, approx. 11 km at Partridge Hills • Sept. 14 (meet at 9am)

MANAGING MODERN DAY STRESS FROM A TIBETAN BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE See What's Happening Downtown

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS: THE INSIDE STORY (MSRS) MS Victory Centre, 1120-1/07 St (471-3034) • MSRS, a six week series of discussions including the symptoms of MS, symptom management, research and more • Even Thu starting Sept. 11 (7-9pm) • \$25/\$45 (couple)/\$35 (family)

• Pre-register

QUEER LISTINGS

AIXOS (454-8449) • A support group, local chapter of the international organization of Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic Gay and Lesbian Christians

BOOTS AND SADDLES See What's Happening Downtown

(single entry, 12am-6pm); tickets and weekend passes available at the Varscona box office

EXCESS UNWANTED GROWTH The 3rd Space, 1151-103 St (420-7577) • Kris Loranger, Matthew Kloster and Andrew Macready star in playwright David Owen's absurd comedy about a diabolical coach potato and his upright roommate whose spectacularly messy apartment spawns a greater social and professional life than any of them put together. With four other short plays by Owen, including Why Are We Here? and Handeling Over the Abyss • Until Sept. 13 (8pm) • \$10 (Tue-Sat); pay-what-you-can Wednesday (6pm) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

MY BIG FAT "GEEK" WEDDING Celebrations Dinner Theatre, 11301 Fort Rd (448-9339) • Wednesdays through Saturday (weekend passes); \$12 (single entry, 6pm-12am); \$10

BUDDYS NITE CLUB 11725 Jasper Ave (488-6636) • Open 9-3 • Dancing, strip contests, go-go boys • Every Mon: Free pool, DJs Arrow Chaser, Jeffy Pop, Code Red • No membership needed

DIGNITY EDMONTON (482-6845) Support community for lesbian Catholics and friends

DOWN UNDER 11224 Jasper Ave (482-7960) • Steam bath

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (422-6207) • An organization for gay men and lesbians in business and their non-gay friends to share business knowledge, learn, make friends and network in a positive, proud space where being yourself is the norm

GAY AND LESBIAN COMMUNITY CENTRE INC. EDMONTON (GLCC) See What's Happening Downtown

GAY MEN'S OUTREACH CREW (GMOC) See What's Happening Downtown

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY See What's Happening Downtown

ICARE See What's Happening Downtown

ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB See What's Happening Downtown

INNATE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CHURCH United Church, 1144-84 Ave (474-0733) • Every Sun (7pm): Worship services. Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community

LIVING POSITIVE www.connect.acb.ca/livpos (488-5768) • Edmonton Persons Living with HIV Society. Peer-facilitated support groups, peer counseling. Daily drop-in

LUTHERANS CONCERNED www.lcna.org (426-0905) • A spiritual community which gathers monthly for sharing, friendship, individual support and a safe space for our own spiritual questions

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB www.geocities.com/makingwaves_edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encour-

aged to participate. Socializing after practices • Practices every Mon and Thu

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH INC. TON (429-2321) • Weekly non-denominational church services

PFLAG See What's Happening Downtown

POLICE LIASON COMMITTEE (421-8777/1-877-8821, ext. 2038) • Edmonton Police Service and the gay and lesbian community

PRIME TIMES (426-7019) • Meetings every second Sunday of the month at 3pm. A social group for gay/bisexual men over 40 and their friends

THE ROOST See What's Happening Downtown

SECRETS BAR AND GRILL See What's Happening Downtown

THUNDERBIRD/TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP See What's Happening Downtown

WOODYS 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Sun-Thu 1-12; Fri 1-3 • Gay nightclub. Every Sun (7-12am): karaoke with Tizzy. Every Wed: game show. Every Fri: free pool. Every weekend: open stage, dance with DJ Arrow Chaser • No membership needed

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH www.youthunderstandingyouth.com Happening Downtown

SPECIAL EVENTS

AIDS WALK CANADA See What's Happening Downtown

ANTIQUES AND MEMORABILIA Transita/Tin Leisure Centre, 231 Campsite Road, Spruce Grove (963-2777/987-2121) • Show and sale • Sept. 12 (5-9pm); Sept. 13 (10am-6pm); Sept. 14 (10am-4pm) • \$12 (and under free)

FOOT EDMONTON PARK Fox Drive, Whitmud Drive

and Patricia Benedict in *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* playwright Martin McDonagh's black comedy about an Irish gravedigger who must confront some unpleasant aspects of his past when he is required to exhume the body of his dead wife • Sept. 16-28 • Tickets available at Roxy Theatre box office

TAKING SIDES Timmins Centre for the Arts, U of A Campus, 87 Ave, 112 St (492-2495) • Presented by Studio Theatre • Music, Movie directs, Tim Dresser plays, and more • Sept. 16-17 • Tickets \$15-\$20

TRANSFESTIVAL Devonian Botanic Garden, 510 North of Devon on Hwy 60 (987-3054) • Featuring Local fruit growers, lectures and information and samples of fruit • Sun, Sept. 14 (10am-4pm)

FRUIT GROWERS FESTIVAL Devonian Botanic Garden, 510 North of Devon on Hwy 60 (987-3054) • Featuring Local fruit growers, lectures and information and samples of fruit • Sun, Sept. 14 (10am-4pm)

O'BRYNE'S GOLF CLASSIC Edmonton Springs Golf Resort (414-6766) • Mon, Sept. 15

PATHWAYS TO ADVENTURE Best Western Sherwood Hotel and Conference Centre, 2100 Prentiss Way, Sherwood Park (432-8561 ext. 228) • Trade show presented by Scour Canada • Sat, Sept. 13 (10am-4pm)

PKINIC IN THE PARKLAND McMillan Ranch on Hastings-Lake (492-8558, 420-1757) • Music festival featuring iBombard, Le Fuze, Cory Danyluk and Sarah Card and more • Sun, Sept. 14 (1-5:30pm) • \$50 (picnic lunch)/\$10 (child 5-14)

SALVADOR ALLLENDE: HIS WORK AND LEGACY 30 YEARS LATER (467-0612/462-6964) • International Centre, HUB 172, U of A Campus • Queen Alexandra Community Hall, 10427 University Ave, Dinner with Chilean writer Patricia Verdugo; Sept. 21 (6pm), \$25+ Education South, Room 129, U of A Campus • A conversation with Patricia Verdugo; Sept. 22 (7:30pm) free • Stanley Milner Library Theatre, Alberta College Auditorium, City Hall See What's Happening Downtown

SONGS OF THE STREET FUNDRAISER See What's Happening Downtown

SWING FOR STOLLERY GOLF CLASSIC Goose Hummock Golf Resort (489-7669) • Proceeds to the Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation • Sept. 11

A TASTE OF AFICA Mill Woods United Church, 15 Grand Meadow Crescent (465-2202/418-3322) • Benefit dinner and silent auction in aid of the Seeds of Hope AIDS Relief campaign; entertainment by Sisters of the Desert Moon, Jean Claude Kamou • Sat, Sept. 20 (7pm-12) • \$25 (adult)/\$15 (student)

JAZZ DOWNTOWN—Retro music DJ Dan • Sun: Betty Ford Hangover Clinic Show Beer Bash; every long weekend with DJ Zappy • Tie-This \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member); Fri-Sat \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member); Sun: \$2

SECRETS BAR AND GRILL 10249-107 St (990-1818) • Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

TRANSEXUAL/TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP egret@hotmail.com • Meetings every fourth Tuesday of the month • Information and mutual support for transgendered people in an open, friendly and safe environment. Open to transsexuals, transvestites, cross-dressers, drag queens/kings

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton (412-2205) • 9912-106 St (488-3234) • www.youthunderstandingyouth.com • Every Sat (7-9pm) • A facilitated social/support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, straight and questioning youth under the age of 25

SPECIAL EVENTS

AIDS WALK CANADA City Hall, Sir Winston Churchill Sq (488-5742) • HIV/AIDS Walk • Sun, Sept. 21

SALVADOR ALLLENDE: HIS WORK AND LEGACY 30 YEARS LATER (467-0612/462-6964) • City Hall, 1, Sir Winston Churchill Sq; Chile: 30 Years Later-We Remember; Sept. 11 (6:30pm) • Alberta College Auditorium, 10050 MacDonald Drive; Chile: Never Again: all voices, all our memories concert; Sept. 13 (7pm); \$5 (under 15 free) • Stanley A. Milner Library, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq; Allende: 30 Years Later concert with Alejandro Cifuentes (piano); Sept. 16 (7pm); \$10 • Education South and the International Centre U of A Campus, Queen Alexandra Community Hall See Events weekly

SONGS OF THE STREET FUNDRAISER Stanley A. Milner Library, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (423-2285 ext. 139/496-7011) • An Evening of the Arts presentations by poets, multimedia artists, musicians, and visual artists • Fri, Sept. 12 (7pm) • Admission by donation • Fundraiser in support of the "Songs of the Street"

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

www.edmontondowntown.com

DANCE

REVEALED BY FIRE Shactor Theatre, The Citadel, 9828-101A Ave (438-4122/988-6534) • A multi-media collaboration presented by Usha Kal Niktan, choreography by Lata Pada • Fri, Sept. 19 (8pm) • \$22.50 adv. rows 1-11/\$17 general • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY 1018-106 St (488-6611/4808-5900) • Open Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm (closed all hols) • **MAIN GALLERY** MUGS AND IUGS VESSELS OF LIBATION: Until Sept. 27 • DISCOVERY GALLERY: • BLACK AND WHITE WITH A SPOT OF GOLD Weaving and spinning by members of the Edmonton Weaver's Guild; until Sept. 13 • Glassworks by Todd Sarafonov and Darren Petersen; Sept. 20-Nov. 1

CITY HALL City Room; Sir Winston Churchill Sq (426-0072) • WHAT DO WE ART! Works by Alberta Society of Artists • Sept. 14-26 • Opening reception Sun, Sept. 14 (2-4pm)

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free will astrology

BY ROB BREZSNY



Mar 21 - Apr 19

A study by psychologists at the University of Sussex in Great Britain has found that taking part in protests, demonstrations or strikes is good for you. Interviews with activists revealed that participants experienced a deep sense of happiness and even euphoria as a result of being involved in such events. By my astrological reckoning, this will be especially true for you, Aries, in the coming weeks. If you haven't already found a constructive channel for your rebellious mojo, start searching now.



Apr 20 - May 20

"Both Picasso and T.S. Eliot are credited with saying 'Good artists borrow, great artists steal,'" notes music critic Peter Gorman. "Credit it to Picasso and it comes across as bravado, a declaration that great art comes from those who appropriate whatever they damn well please. Credit the quote to Eliot and it seems more like wordplay; to borrow is to imitate and give back, to steal is to make it one's own." Study these tricky assertions about the creative process, Taurus. They should incite provocative meditations as you negotiate a turning point in your relationship with your own fertility.

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VW0904-0918 (wks)

dance

Veselka Ukrainian Dance Association
Welcomes new members 18 and over
Some experience preferred
Rehearsals September 15th-7:00 pm-Inglewood Elementary 11515-127 Street
For more information contact Cindy at 438-0581.
VW0904-0911 (wks)

education

BELLY DANCE CLASSES, START SEPT. 17. BEG. INT. TRIBAL, EXPERIENCED INSTRUCTOR. SMALL CLASS SIZE, NORTHWEST LOCATION. 12 WEEKS. CONTACT LANA 382-2296 OR lana_bellybelly@hotmail.com

VW0911-11wks

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